

**MOST UP-TO-DATE CALENDAR IN NEW ENGLAND!**

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# **GayCommunity News**

THE WEEKLY FOR LESBIANS AND GAY MALES

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# GayCommunityNews

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*Will Issue Decision in Two Months*

## U.S. Supreme Court Reviews Gay Case

By Urvashi Vaid

WASHINGTON, DC — Under the watchful eyes of dozens of gay and lesbian observers, the United States Supreme Court on Jan. 18 heard its first full oral argument on a case involving an openly gay man and a gay rights issue. At stake was a New York Court of Appeals decision declaring the state's loitering statute unconstitutional on the basis of an earlier appellate court decision which struck down the state's sodomy statute.

The case, *State of New York v. Robert Uplinger and Susan Butler*, grew out of two separate incidents consolidated on appeal because both cases raised the constitutionality of a state law making it illegal to loiter in a public place in order to engage or solicit another person to engage "in deviate sexual intercourse or other sexual behavior of a deviate nature." Uplinger, a gay man from Buffalo, was arrested under the loitering statute in August, 1981, by an undercover cop stationed in a predominately gay neighborhood. Butler, who had been convicted on prostitution charges was arrested in April, 1981.

The New York appellate court based its decision in part on a case it had decided, *People v. Onofre*. Since sodomy was no longer criminal after *Onofre*, the Court reasoned that the solicitation should not be criminal. This decision was appealed to the Supreme Court by Erie County District At-

torney Richard Arcara. Buffalo attorney William Gardner, a board member of Lambda Legal Defense Fund who has long been active in gay rights legislation, represented Uplinger.

"When they [the Supreme Court] granted [review] nobody had any idea why they did it, what they were trying to get at," noted Abby Rubinfeld, managing attorney for the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, and co-author of an *amicus* brief Lambda filed in this case. "After the oral argument, I still left wondering why they had taken the [review]."

The Supreme Court has considered the issue of gay sex only once before, in a 1975 case called *Doe v. Commonwealth's Attorney of Richmond*. The court summarily (without review or opinion) affirmed the Fourth Circuit ruling that Virginia's sodomy statute was constitutional.

The Justices themselves seemed confused about *Uplinger* from the start. The first source of confusion was the highly unusual *amicus* brief filed by New York state Attorney General Robert Abrams — a brief that put him at loggerheads with D.A. Arcara. Abrams, who is supportive of gay rights, argued in his brief that the law as applied "punishes persons simply for their words and for their decision to engage in consensual sexual activity protected by the right to privacy." But, Abrams argued

that the entire law should not be struck down, because certain types of "deviate sexual conduct" other than consensual sodomy may still be constitutionally prohibited (e.g., solicitation of sex with minors).

Throughout the presentations by Arcara and Gardner, the Justices interrupted constantly, seeking clarification of the constitutional grounds for the New York court's decision. Gardner argued that the key issue involved was the First Amendment and Uplinger's right to invite another man to his home to engage in legally protected private consensual sex.

Arcara argued that the state has a right to control this kind of "wholly erotic" solicitation and that the statute was necessary to protect minors and elderly citizens in Buffalo, especially those living in areas that are being "taken over" by "these individuals."

Justice Rehnquist appeared most interested in viewing this case in light of the Supreme Court's earlier decision on privacy rights. When Gardner commented that the issue of privacy rights presented in *Onofre* had not been properly briefed in *Uplinger*, Justice O'Connor replied that although the Supreme Court may not be able to consider the merits of *Onofre*, they certainly could "review the constitutional law underlying *Onofre*."

One of the dangers in the court's reevaluation of the constitutional



The Long Island Connection

Robert Uplinger

basis for a pro-gay decision like *Onofre* is that they could interpret the right to privacy more narrowly. Any Supreme Court interpretation of the right to privacy would have important consequences on the gay civil rights movement's effort to eliminate laws criminalizing gay sex.

Justices Marshall and Stevens were absent throughout the presentation of the case and Justice Brennan walked out in the middle

of an argument. Chief Justice Burger seemed concerned with the public/private conduct distinction and with understanding the basis of the Court of Appeals decision. Justice Blackmun, author of the *Roe v. Wade* abortion decision, was silent throughout the argument.

Justice White appeared to respond in the most conventionally homophobic manner and seemed a

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## Press Fund Organizes Response to Straight Media

By Bob Nelson

NEW YORK — They're described as "the new power brokers in this American city" who have "achieved full civil rights and economic power and are now moving provocatively into the political arena." Who could that be? Why, the gay men of San Francisco, of course, if you believe the 1980 CBS documentary "Gay Power, Gay Politics," narrated by veteran journalist Harry Reasoner.

That exaggeration of gay influence in San Francisco appears as part of a new video program produced by the Media Fund for Human Rights, the fundraising and charitable-purposes arm of the Gay Press Association. The program is an attempt to "talk back to the media" by featuring mangled and distorted coverage of our lives along with gay responses. Producer Morgan Pinney uses local talkshow interviews of gay activists to provide the alternate side of the story.

Armistead Maupin criticizes the "Gay Politics" reporters for "keeping their cameras at crotch level." In response to a piece on the CBS program "Sixty Minutes" about the Feinstein recall election last spring, Sister Boom Boom says that "I talked to Morley Safer for two hours about San Francisco politics. He was more interested in my legs." A male reporter from public station KQED in San Francisco tracks Safer down to ask him the source of a disputed statistic on gay voter turnout. Safer's re-

sponse? "Give me a kiss and I'll tell you."

The "Talk Back" program was the main draw for the Media Fund for Human Rights fundraiser at the College Bar on January 18. About 60 people paid \$25 a head, netting the fund \$1500 and marking new visibility for the organization.

This increased visibility provokes some questions. In both the "Talk Back" program and in the invitation to the fundraiser, the Media Fund makes some expansive claims for itself: for instance, that MFHR "is putting all gay organizations into instantaneous contact through a national computer based communications network." As it turns out, the Media Fund has taken over the troubled wire service operated by the Gay Press Association for its members, and is expanding it to serve as a computer bulletin board for professional caucuses for journalists, doctors, lawyers and so forth.

Morgan Pinney, the GPA treasurer and director of the Media Fund, admits that the Fund has done little to encourage such caucuses, but plans to provide the communications link once the caucuses form. "It's probably safe to say there's somebody with a computer in any gay organization, so they'd be the natural contact for the service," says Pinney.

Another claim made by the organization is that it is "organizing the professional and technical apparatus needed to give a gay

perspective directly into the electronic newsrooms of America. The group hopes to sign up with a news service that already distributes

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## Caribou Chamber Rejects Gay Group's Ad

By Christine Guilfoyle

CARIBOU, ME — A gay group in Caribou, Maine has been refused paid advertising space in a program book for the local winter carnival. Northern Lambda Nord (NLN) put the advertisement in last year's booklet, but when they attempted to advertise this year, they were refused.

A spokesperson for the NLN, who preferred not to use his name, told *GCN* that he was told by Cindy Hebert, the assistant director of the Caribou Chamber of Commerce, that a number of advertisers in the 1983 booklet threatened to withhold their ads this year if NLN's ad reappeared.

In spite of this, the NLN's executive committee decided to submit the advertisement. It was officially refused by William Johnson, the Director of the Caribou Chamber of Commerce, who wrote to NLN, "I must inform you that advertising space in the 1984 Winter Carnival Book is available only to Caribou business firms and to sponsors of the Winter Carnival, therefore, we are

returning your check and the ad copy."

An NLN spokesperson said, "The letter from the Chamber of Commerce about 'businesses only' is an excuse to justify their refusal of our ad."

*GCN* contacted the Chamber of Commerce and was told by Hebert that they would not make any comment on the matter. When asked why, she said, "Because it only creates more dialogue."

Hebert was also asked if she told NLN that other advertisers were threatening to pull their ads because of NLN's inclusion. Hebert refused comment.

A spokesperson for the national office of the Chamber, Milton Mitler, told *GCN* that each local chapter is autonomous and that they act independently.

NLN told *GCN* that this is only the latest in a long line of incidents. Their spokesperson said that they have had problems with the local weekly newspapers refusing paid advertisements and that community notices have been

treated similarly by both the radio stations and the news weeklies.

NLN wrote in a press release concerning this latest incident that the excuse of "businesses only" given by Johnson is "the same reason given for denying NLN advertising space in the new County tourist book which was recently published. But the tourist book contains an ad from the Houlton Rotary Club which is not a business but a service organization."

NLN has written a letter of complaint to the Maine Human Rights Commission. *GCN* was unable to reach their director at press time.

NLN recently celebrated its fourth anniversary and serves Aroostook County in Maine and Madawaska, Victoria, and Carleton Counties in New Brunswick. It publishes a monthly newsletter and operates a "gay phone-line" in addition to providing social activities for lesbians and gay men in the Canadian/American border region.

*— filed from Boston*



# News Notes

## quote of the week

"The flag waver (Washington D.C. dj Gary Gilbert) has dedicated his life to curing homosexuals of their sissy lifestyle.

" 'I want to make them into real men,' he pledged recently. 'The gays don't know what they're missing. The greatest high they can have is a good woman. If I can convert five queers a week into real men, I will have served my country very well.' "

— *Weekly World News*, Dec. 20, 1983, patted the D.C. disc jockey on the back for his anti-gay remarks. Gilbert, known on the air as "Gary D," regularly assaults women, gay people and "Combies" over the air waves on radio station WPKX (FM), a country and western station. *Weekly World News*, a radical conservative publication, compounded the bashing by praising Gilbert, calling him a "superpatriot" and a "fighting mad flagwaver."

In the Jan. 6 issue of the *Washington Blade*, however, it was reported that Gilbert came out as a gay man on the air. Despite Gilbert's sudden change of tone (not to mention preference), the D.C. Gay Activists Alliance has promised to organize a coalition of civil rights and religious groups to get Gilbert off the air.

## midwest peace camp

MILWAUKEE, WI — A women's peace group in the Great Lakes area will open a peace encampment on May 28, 1984 to oppose the U.S. Navy's proposed installation in northern Wisconsin and northern Michigan of the world's largest one-way radio transmitter. The transmitter, Project ELF, would be a giant "trigger" for the fleet of Trident nuclear submarines, now under construction. The Navy refers to ELF as a "beeper," which would have the capacity to summon the fleet to the ocean's surface for the purpose of launching first-strike nuclear weapons.

The Women's Peace Presence to Stop Project ELF seeks donations of camping equipment, building materials, an electrical generator, food, a vehicle and, of course, money. They hope to purchase 40 acres of land in the Chequamegon National Forest, site of the Wisconsin component of ELF. For more information or to make a donation, write the Women's Peace Presence to Stop Project ELF, 731 State St., Madison, WI 53703.

## new york aids forum will focus on black community

NEW YORK — An ad hoc group of black lesbian and gay activists has announced that a forum on AIDS targetted to the needs of black gay men and lesbians will be held on Feb. 1 at Hunter College in Manhattan. Two health care workers, a staff member of the Haitian Information Center and a black gay man with AIDS will make up the panel.

One organizer, Isaac Jackson, was quoted in a press release, "The black gay male community's presence has been relatively invisible at previous AIDS forums and conferences. And the media has unfortunately followed suit. But we've been hit just as hard by this epidemic, and it is vitally important that information be disseminated throughout our community."

The forum will focus on medical facts about AIDS, the impact of AIDS on the Haitian community and AIDS and black health care. A question and answer period will follow prepared presentations by the panelists.

The forum will be held in Room 615 of Hunter's West Auditorium, Lexington Ave. at 68th St., beginning at 7:00 p.m. It is free and open to the public.

## a gay valentine

BOSTON — The Lesbian/Gay Pride Committee has come up with a way to make your Valentine's Day uniquely gay. At competitive prices, the Committee will deliver roses and/or balloons to your object(s) of affection. Proceeds will benefit the fourteenth annual gay and lesbian pride activities, scheduled for Saturday, June 16. Watch for order forms and flyers at your favorite bars and businesses, or call 889-4777 for more information.

## 'i'm gonna be an old lesbian'

PORTLAND, OR — A group of women in this city are forming an organization to work on the fulfillment of many a dykes' fantasy — the old lesbian's home. The group is meeting to discuss the establishment of a multi-care retirement program for elderly lesbians, the Old Dykes Home Project.

## murphy gaycott is on

SAN FRANCISCO — Poor Eddie Murphy, the comedian who was just trying to get a laugh out of his audience by making tasteless and hateful jokes about gay people and AIDS, now faces a gaycott of his records and videotapes, according to the *Bay Area Reporter*.

Gramophone Records in San Francisco, Video West in West Hollywood, and the F Street Bookstore in San Diego all have elected to leave Murphy's recorded materials in the shipping crates.

Dick McCaffry of Comcast Cablevision, serving Philadelphia, Detroit and New Jersey, called Murphy's performance "the low point of the year. It had the most negative response we ever received."

Meanwhile, Murphy's manager continues to deny his client is homophobic. And Tim Glott, the vice president and general sales manager of Paramount Pictures Home Video, the show's producer, refuses to comment on the matter.



## boy scouts rebuffed again

SACRAMENTO — The California State Supreme Court has unanimously ruled that the Boy Scouts of America cannot, on the grounds of sexuality only, ban homosexuals from its organization, according to the *Bay Area Reporter*. The Mount Diablo Council of the Boy Scouts had sought a review of an Oct. 3 Court of Appeals ruling, which the court upheld.

In the previous ruling, a lawsuit filed by former Eagle Scout Tim Curran (above, with his Eagle Scout badge) was reinstated. The latest court ruling clears the way for Curran to proceed with his suit against the Boy Scouts. Curran was expelled because he is gay and seeks reinstatement in his Berkeley troop. The Boy Scouts must now show that Curran's membership can be revoked on grounds other than his homosexuality.

Curran said, "They would have to prove that I wouldn't be a good leader, but they've already indicated the opposite by passing me as an Eagle Scout."

## guilty verdict in ann arbor gay pride assault

ANN ARBOR, MI — A local businessman, Robert Higgins, was convicted last month of assault with a dangerous weapon, a charge arising from an incident which occurred at a gay and lesbian pride rally last June, according to the *Ann Arbor News*.

Higgins, 36, was accused of threatening marchers with a loaded shotgun at the June 25 rally and was found guilty by a jury. Sentencing is to take place Feb. 3, but Higgins jumped bail on Dec. 6 and has eluded police ever since then. His lawyer, Seymour Floyd, says he has not heard from Higgins and doesn't know if sentencing can happen without Higgins.

At the trial, Floyd's defense of Higgins rested on his constitutional right to free speech, which Floyd maintained he was exercising at the rally when he was allegedly struck by a woman. The prosecution, however, maintained that Higgins returned to the rally after provoking marchers into physical and verbal altercations and that he intended to injure or frighten marchers with a shotgun.

During a heated confrontation at the rally, witnesses reported that Higgins had shouted "I am God," "What about AIDS?" and "You people will burn in hell."

## oakland rights bill passes

OAKLAND — A strong gay rights ordinance cleared its final hurdle on Jan. 10 to become law in this California East Bay city, according to the *Bay Area Reporter*. The law was approved by a unanimous 8-0 vote and was enacted without anti-gay protests; in fact, it was voted on without debate by the Council.

Oakland's anti-discrimination measure one-ups San Francisco's in a critical area. It prohibits all businesses in the city from discriminating against gay men and lesbians in hiring. San Francisco's gay rights law exempts businesses with five or fewer employees. Oakland's law also does not exempt religious organizations from compliance, as does the state's anti-gay discrimination bill, now awaiting consideration by the state Senate.

## medger evers college gets new president

BROOKLYN, NY — In spite of strong student and community support for a black woman president, Dr. Jay Carrington Chun, a black man, has been appointed to head Medger Evers Community College, according to the *Guardian*.

Medger Evers has a predominately black female student body which, in coalition with faculty and community members, had backed black feminist Gloria Joseph for appointment to the post. The student body is 75 percent female and 89 percent black.

Activists at the school have waged a three-year fight to rid the school of two unpopular and unresponsive administrations. First, a 110-day sit-in in the administrative offices resulted in the ouster of Richard Trent in May 1981. Trent was replaced by acting president Dennis Paul. During Paul's administration, 400 students were reported to have left the school.

Chun is seen as an improvement because of his apparent willingness to respond to students' needs. He has pledged to make childcare services for students a priority of his administration. Students have also demanded more women in leadership positions, tenure for faculty activists, creation of a separate black studies program, restoration of four-year status to the college and renovation of campus buildings.

Medger Evers students have drawn support from local women's groups, many of them white organizations, including the National Organization for Women, the National Congress of Neighborhood Women, the Coalition of Black Single Mothers and Dykes Against Racism Everywhere. Safiya Bande, of the school's women's center, called feminist support "very critical to our progress," and "a signal to black women [of the possibilities] of working together with the women's movement."

## northeastern coalition forms

BOSTON — A coalition of Northeastern University students, faculty and staff has been formed to make recommendations to the school which will improve services to gay men and lesbians at the school, according to a press release.

The Sexual Preference Coalition may conduct a campus survey, workshops and lectures to inform the University community about homosexuality and alleviate anti-gay prejudice at the school. Formation of the group follows the addition of "sexual preference" to the school's nondiscrimination policy by university president Kenneth G. Ryder in June, 1983.

## hustlers recant claims of sex with mississippi governor

JACKSON, MS — The three transvestite hustlers who claimed to have had sex with Gov. Bill Allain when he was running for office now say they were paid to make the allegations, according to an Associated Press dispatch.

The Jackson *Clarion-Ledger* reported that two of the three men had called the paper on Allain's inauguration "to set the record straight." One said, "I wouldn't know Bill Allain if he walked in that door."

The attorney who conducted the investigation, a supporter of Allain's Republican opponent, said the hustlers were pressured to recant their stories. He alluded to a "combination of threat and reward" to force them to change their stories.

The hustlers' claims of selling sex to Allain were made public just two weeks before the election in November. Allain denied the accusations and was elected with 56 percent of the votes cast on Nov. 8.



# Legislating Liberation: Talk with a Lobbyist

By Larry Goldsmith

That the Massachusetts lesbian and gay rights bill did as well as it did in 1983 was due in large part to the efforts of a full-time State House lobbyist hired by the Massachusetts Gay Political Caucus (MGPC). For ten years, lesbians and gay men, with the help of liberal senators and representatives, have fought for passage of the legislation. In 1983, the bill passed in the House of Representatives for the first time and withstood the test of a reconsideration motion. In the Senate, however, opponents of the bill, ostensibly concerned about the constitutionality of non-discrimination policies based on sexual preference, sent the legislation to the state's Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) for an opinion. In a unanimous decision, and to the surprise of few, the justices affirmed the legitimacy of the proposed law. But by the time the SJC opinion was handed down, the Senate president was in Israel and the Senate was mere hours from its year-end adjournment. The diversionary tactic had accomplished its goal; the bill was dead, and supporters of the legislation would have to start the laborious process of committee hearings, lobbying, and rollcalls all over again.

What follows is an interview with Arline Isaacson, lobbyist for the MGPC, conducted at the GCN office on January 18. (The interview has been edited for space and grammatical considerations.) With the 1983 legislative session now two weeks behind us and the 1984 session now two weeks old, Arline and I talked about the philosophy behind the bill, the gains made in 1983, and the lobbying strategies used to draw legislators over to our side. And we talked about the prospects for 1984, an election year for the state legislature. The MGPC, after its long and arduous fight for last year's bill, has begun to organize and prepare for the new legislative session. For more information, write to: Massachusetts Gay Political Caucus, Astor Station, P.O. Box 6, Boston, MA 02123; (617) 262-1565.

**Larry Goldsmith:** This year, you were successful with the House and nearly successful with the Senate. In the end, what went wrong?

**Arline Isaacson:** What went wrong is that although we did have the votes in the Senate to pass the bill, we only had it by one vote, one slim vote. And of those 20 people who supported us, who supported the bill itself, there were not enough people in powerful leadership positions... who were strong enough about our issue...

The first time that bill was being debated [in the Senate] we didn't even have that many people get up to speak for the bill on the floor, and that's when [Senator Denis] McKenna [D-Somerville] and [Senator Joseph] Walsh [D-Boston] were screaming faggot and dyke all over the place and saying the most ridiculous things in the world.

If there's any lesson to be culled from all the stuff that took place at the State House, it's how unbelievably important contacting our legislators has been and will continue to be... I know that I could never have turned around some of those votes unless people on a grass-roots level were calling up to prove that what I said in their offices was true, to prove that there were constituents who really wanted the bill passed... On an issue like ours, ten phone calls, ten letters leave an enormous impression and would really either change someone's vote or make them more firm as a supporter.

**“There's really nothing they can say that we can't answer adequately... We can answer every concern they have about the bill, but they're not necessarily going to hear it or respond to it.”**

**LG:** What kind of lobbying strategy did you use?

**AI:** The most important lobbying strategy this year was actively soliciting one-on-one conversations with as many legislators as possible... A lot of those people were more approachable than I thought. I expected that there was going to be a much higher rate of hostile rejection, and there was plenty of it, but not as much as I expected...

**LG:** Say you go into the office of a legislator who you know is probably going to be against the bill. What do you say?

**AI:** The best thing to do is to allow them to say what it is that they know that they think... You know that there are certain hot issues that always get them... And when you talk to them long enough you find out that this one never took his thinking past the fact that when he was fifteen years old and was standing at a bus stop, a man put his hand on his leg, and that's it, that's all he can focus on, he can't hear a single argument other than that.

In other cases, they'll be a little bit more up front. They'll say they support the issue, but they're concerned about their community. The one good thing about this issue is that I think in a way it's a really easy issue to argue, because there's no really good argument that anyone can use against us. We have all the arguments on our side, and fortunately now, after ten years of lobbying for the bill, we also have lots of facts and statistics, quotes and endorsements to back us up, so that we have a distinct advantage. There's really nothing they can say that we can't answer adequately. What's



Arline Isaacson

frustrating is that you know we can answer every concern they have about the bill, but they're not necessarily going to hear it or respond to it.

**LG:** It seems like the success this year in the house was because a lot of legislators who were hedging, who thought well, maybe they would vote for it, but they were afraid of what their constituents would think — it seems like a lot of them were won over. Is that true?

**“They think they don't know any gay people and therefore they believe they never come into contact with homophobia in a way that would indicate to them it has to be dealt with through legislation.”**

**AI:** Yes. This year, a ballpark figure would be that about ten people who were voting against us changed their votes, and that brought us over the scale.

There are a lot of legislators, it's amazing a lot of them don't know that discrimination exists. It seems hard to believe that anyone with two eyes and two ears could feel that way, but they think they don't know any gay people and therefore they believe they never come into contact with homophobia in a way that would indicate to them that it has to be dealt with through legislation... The homophobes hide a lot behind the argument that there's no discrimination, and because there's no discrimination, the only reason we're asking for this bill is because we want the legislature to condone homosexuality. You've heard that one on the floor. We're lucky in that because we now have a lot of endorsements from religious institutions, so we can throw those quotes at them when they start worrying about 'Does this law condone homosexuality?' And of course, the answer is, it doesn't, and we neither need nor ask for your approval.

**LG:** But what do you do with the legislators who will say 'Well, I'm with you, and I can see a need for this bill, but I just can't do it because my constituents are just too conservative'?

**AI:** When someone says something like that, when it's a real iffy person, we'll point out that no one who has ever voted for this bill has ever lost an election because of their vote on this bill. It rarely, if ever, comes up during the election campaigns. Everybody thinks it will because it seems like such a hot issue...

So for the iffy people we point out that there's not a problem with their elections, that their constituents don't care as much as they seem to think they do, that ten percent of their constituency, at least ten percent, is gay or lesbian, and that there's a greater percentage of friends, family, lovers, relatives and neighbors of those people who like, love, and admire them and wouldn't want them to be discriminated against. And on top of that the people who are just for fairness and justice for all and who think it's the right thing to do.

**LG:** On the Senate side, if our supporters were weak, a lot of those supporters were people we've traditionally thought of as friends... What does this tell us about our friends?

**AI:** There has been a lot of talk in the community about how to interpret the fact that there were about five votes in the Senate, and during about three different periods on three different days, a total of about seven legislators were not

there for the votes. Seven people on our side at various times were not there for various reasons; each one of them missed one vote...

There has been a lot of talk about the fact that some people intentionally didn't show up, and there is absolutely no way to confirm or deny that. There's no way to know it for sure. What we do know, in some cases I am convinced, is that there are some people who really legitimately sincerely missed it by accident, that sincerely were doing something else and just didn't realize that it was taking place. But even there... the point is that we've got to make this an issue that's so very important that they would never even think of going to the bathroom if they think the vote's going to come up. They know it's a controversial issue, they know the margin is close, and that we're very appreciative of all the support they've given us through the years, but where we really need their support is at the moment when the vote is taking place.

But I was talking to one legislator after the big controversy over 'Did our friends betray us?' and he pointed out that when you are forming a firing squad, you don't form it in a circle. The point of what he was saying is that we have to make sure that we don't aim the guns at our friends. What I think we would be far wiser to do is make our friends better friends. Even though it may be personally frustrating, it's a political reality.

**LG:** We have all this momentum now, and next year is an election year. Are all the legislators who supported the bill this year going to support it in an election year?

**AI:** I'm worried about this year... There's going to be the very direct and obvious level of the fact that these legislators, these state reps and state senators, are running for election this year. They don't want to be in the State House that long; they want to get our early to work on their campaigns. They're not going to want to vote on a controversial issue and if one comes up they're going to want to vote on the side that they think is best for them politically... Some people are going to be looking to the Studds race this year, and even though it should have no effect on this particular bill, clearly it will, in some people's eyes, those in particular who have political animosity, who are down there and might want to run for his seat.

**LG:** You mentioned a division between people who believe in dealing with politicians and the system — homophobic as they might be, because they're the people in power and can give us our rights — and people who think it's just not worth it, who just ignore it. But there's also another division, even among the people who think the gay rights bill is important. It amounts to what you think the ultimate purpose of the bill is, whether it's the means or the end of the bill that's more important: whether having the bill is really the most important thing, or whether the process, the lobbying and educational process of trying to get the bill passed is the most important thing. And there will be different strategies for getting the bill passed, depending on which you think is the most important... If you argue that getting the bill passes is the highest good, actually getting the bill passed into law, then you want to use the most practical strategy, which might be not talking very much about what the bill really means. On the other hand, if you want to educate people about gay people and actually having the bill passed is not the most immediate goal, then you might talk a lot more openly about gay people. Where do you fall in relation to those two camps?... What's the purpose of the bill, in your mind?

**AI:** Those two aspects that you're asking about for sure are not mutually exclusive, and for sure there is a dual goal. When people started lobbying for this bill ten years ago, there very clearly was no chance that it was going to pass then and everybody knew it. But it was the start of the process of getting people talking and more aware of our issue. The fact that people have to be made more aware of our community remains today. But today we're actually a lot closer to actually and literally getting the bill passed. Is that important? I think it is.

**“...we're very appreciative of all the support they've given us through the years, but where we really need their support is at the moment when the vote is taking place.”**

I'm not sure of the answer to the question 'Which comes first, the chicken or the egg: which comes first, educating the population and from that we get the law that we want, or do you get the law first and that sets a tone which helps bring the population along?' There are some legislators who have said to me 'This bill will pass when the time is right. It's not right just yet, so I won't vote for it now, but in a few years I'll probably be with you, when more people think it's alright to pass it.' And I think it's critical to argue with them that education of the population should never precede the law. The law is there, ideally, to decide what is and isn't just. Obviously it doesn't work out that way, but the law on something like this is not there to represent what the majority — of course, the democratic process means that the majority decides what is right and wrong. But we would hope that the laws would define what is and is not

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# Community Voices

## If you stick with us...

you can become a member of the lesbian and gay movement's newspaper of record.

The *Gay Community News* was first published in June, 1973, just prior to Boston's annual lesbian and gay pride march, and has published weekly since. Initially a mimeographed newsletter and calendar, *GCN* was started by a group of lesbian and gay activists who needed a better way to communicate with each other and the community. The newsletter soon grew into a 16-page tabloid, with its own office and (under-) paid staff. *GCN* has always seen its purpose as providing a forum for discussion of the many issues important to our diverse community, as well as providing the news and features essential to developing an informed and politically active lesbian and gay community.

*GCN* has always been operated as a non-profit collective, depending heavily on the input of an active volunteer membership and elected Board of Directors. Anyone demonstrating an active and extended commitment to working on *GCN* can become a member and help determine the policy and direction of the paper through monthly membership meetings. We need volunteers in order to get the paper out each week and, equally important, to maintain the broad base of perspectives that makes us a *community* newspaper.

Being a community newspaper means that *GCN* is not an organ of any person, business, or movement faction. *GCN* attempts to serve a politically and geographically diverse lesbian and gay community. We need your input in letters, Speaking Outs, articles, news tips, volunteer time, and money. If you have always wondered what it was like to work with a committed group of lesbians and gay men on a newspaper, give us a call. Below are some of the areas where we especially need volunteers:

**Friday nights...** help put *GCN* in the plain brown wrappers and mail it out! Call Chris Guilfooy, or just show up.

**Promotions...** help put together the mailings and projects that get people interested in *GCN*. Call Richard Burns.

## he liked to kiss

Dear *GCN* and Prisoner Project,

The December 10th issue had some really good stories. That one about the handicapped and their right to a sex life reminded me of a friend of mine. Steve (a brother of a lover friend of mine) had M.D. [muscular dystrophy]. I met Joe, Steve's brother, when he was 12 and had just started hustling on the boardwalk. He is a soft feminine type gay.

One Saturday Joe invited me to his house and his brother Steve who caught M.D. at 11 was sitting in a wheelchair. He could read and write and do simple math, but that was all. He also liked to kiss and get kissed. His hands were just starting to curl up, so he had trouble eating. When we finished eating, we took Steve out for some air. We took him to the boardwalk where there were a few people walking around. Wednesday night is a dull night and he wheeled to a dark place and undid his pants and Joe went down on him. "He likes it," he said. I said "What about him? pointing at his bulging cock. So I opened his pants. He had a little three incher that bent to the left. I gave him a hand job until I could feel him about to cum, then swallowed his load.

He had bony legs at fifteen. The disease was destroying his body. He went to a rest home at eighteen and died in three months. Well, Joe and I stuck with Steve thru til the end. As he got older Steve's body got more deformed and his heart

would beat so fast you could hear it as you sucked his cock. Joe was great in keeping in Steve in a cheerful mood.

I also liked the story about coming out. Like all sissy boys I hung around with girls I had a special friend Joanie who was a tomboy. Her friend Barbara, half Irish and half Jewish, was a fighting terror. The boys in school were afraid of her. Her Jewish father was getting ulcers from her behavior. Barbara was into play sex. She would lick a pussy or suck a cock. Joanie would too but she liked girl sex best. I was just getting into selling my services and had a couple of high school boys giving me money for going down on them. It gave me some spending money (and some fun!).

Joanie got in a car accident and died at 15 and Barbara and I spent a lot of time over at her house to comfort her mother. It was about two weeks after the funeral when I told her mother I was queer. She took me in her arms and kissed me. It was the first time I had ever told an adult. It took a great weight off me. I felt light-headed and good inside. She poured me a half a wine and one for herself and said she was happy I trusted her enough to tell her.

Yours in the struggle,  
Robert Jude Ryan,  
(a prisoner),  
8 Production Way,  
Avenel, NJ 07001.

## Managing Editor

*Gay Community News* is seeking applicants for the position of Managing Editor. Ability to facilitate a democratic decision making process, and administrative experience within a non-hierarchical setting helpful, as well as a knowledge of gay journalism and familiarity with the local and national lesbian and gay communities. Applicants should have a commitment to gay liberation, feminism and social change. \$145/week, health benefits, three weeks paid vacation. Please contact Cindy Patton at *GCN*, 167 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02111, (617) 426-4469.

## AIDS Resource List

**AIDS Action Committee** — 16 Haviland Street, Boston, MA 02115, 267-7573

Education and support group for people with AIDS, their families, lovers, friends and health care providers. Provides speakers, conducts forums, rap groups, hospice-trained volunteers, hotline information and referrals. Associated with the Fenway Community Health Center.

**AIDS Action Line** — 536-7733

AIDS Action Committee service, information, referrals and befriending about AIDS. Trained volunteers.

**AIDS Benefit Review Committee** (267-7573) or (725-4849)

Joint subcommittee of Mayor's Committee on AIDS and AIDS Action Committee to coordinate AIDS fundraisers, monitor process and review results. All groups of individuals planning AIDS fundraisers are encouraged to coordinate their efforts with the subcommittee.

**AIDS Hotline** — (424-5916)

The Community Infectious Disease Epidemiology Program of the City of Boston. Staff of public health nurses answer questions about AIDS, make referrals. Col-

lects city-wide data from hospitals on AIDS cases, forwards data to Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, officially determines number of cases probable and under investigation.

**Fenway Community Health Center** 16 Haviland Street, Boston, MA 02115 (267-7573)

Hotline information, medical work-ups, diagnosis, referrals, counseling. A gay sensitive health care facility. Participates in research efforts.

**Gay and Lesbian Counseling Services** 80 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116 (542-5118)

One-on-one counseling for AIDS anxiety. **Gay and Lesbian Hotline** — 6:00 pm to midnight, M-F (426-9371)

Provides information on AIDS, makes referrals. Associated with Gay and Lesbian Counseling Services.

**Haitian Committee on AIDS in Massachusetts** — 117 Harvard Street, Dorchester, MA 02124 (436-2808)

Provides information, referrals, support and emergency assistance to Haitians with AIDS and their families.

## not all of a piece

Dear Friends,

Here I was, trying to catch up on my reading, already in a bad mood anticipating some nasty arguments with the printers tomorrow about fouling up my book (lurking there are some indications they've had emotional troubles with its subject: gay men). Then I picked up the Nov. 19 issue. I got all set to bark at John Kyper for a bad misrepresentation of *WIN*'s collapse. I was going to rant and rave about how their sexual politics was NOT "all of a piece with other struggles," especially their reactions to minority sexualities, but even their particularly dogmatic brand of feminism. I was going to trace their insensitivity all the way from our collective resistance at Austin's anarchist *Rag* in 1974 through Lisa Orlando's letter of complete frustration to *WIN* the spoke for all of us (July, 1983: "I don't even know where to begin...").

But there in the same issue was notice of Ellen Bass' travelling workshop on child sexual abuse, along with Deane Bailey's "Coming Out" piece that began, "I was 12 when I had my first gay experience..." He didn't say if it was with another kid or an adult, but it struck me that a more worthwhile letter might be concerned with urging you to solicit and departmentalize accounts of positive sexual relationships people had when they were kids with much older people. It is almost impossible to find sympathetic politics and media space with which to document these relations, and given the industrialization of sexual abuse prevention, it is becoming desperately important to do so. I do not mean by implication to deny or belittle Bass' work or the voices she has raised. I do mean to do all I can to give the same chance to speak in a supportive environment to those who have had productive, pleasurable relations as children with adults who were sensitive, loving (actually, I hate that word) and courageous, and who have been made to feel guilty, sick, sinful, victimized or politically incorrect for having had them.

Clearly, this documentation in any complete sense is a long way off, and I am definitely not thinking of "scientific research." It will have to start with adults recalling their childhood experiences, and I think if these are to be taken seriously politically (since much of the condemnation is political), the telling will have to start in the radical parts of the gay and lesbian communities. Beth Kelly has in fact given us a fine beginning in 1979 in *GCN*. Some other accounts have appeared by both men and women, but erratically and in the context of magazines not usually taken to be politically conscious or even factual. Further, it would not even seem necessary to limit those accounts to gay or lesbian sex. Deane said he didn't know the difference between gay and straight; it simply felt good. This would be another chance to expand our erotic horizons, just as the recent organization of bisexuality is a positive flight from old dichotomies of role and sexuality.

The next step would be for *GCN* and others to solicit and encourage participation of lesbian and gay "youth" (usually meaning teenaged) accounts. Those relationships would be strengthened by your support, the individuals' self esteem would be reinforced, active and concrete steps would be taken against ageism, and we would all benefit from a closer yet broader and more varied progressive political community. Or something like it.

John Kyper did do us a favor by reprinting Paul Goodman's 1969 *WIN* article (the high point of their sexual consciousness) in which Goodman repeatedly makes the political connections among children, childhood and sexuality — homosexuality in particular. That is a tradition worth continuing and a vision worth developing. And any story of exciting, energizing and humanizing sensuality is worth telling.

Regards,  
David Sonenschein  
Austin, TX

**Mayor's Committee on AIDS** — Room 608, Boston City Hall, Boston, MA 02201 (725-4849)

Coordinates efforts of federal, state, and city health agencies, produces educational material, collects data on cases, reviews policy. Umbrella organization. Media outlet. Conducts forums and provides speakers, distributes AIDS brochures, referrals.

**National Gay Task Force Hotline** (1-800-221-7044)

Toll free national hotline run by NGTF to provide information and referrals.

**Omega Hospice and Bereavement Program** 270 Washington Street, Somerville, MA 02143 (776-6369)

Ongoing free support group for gay men and lesbians dealing with life-threatening illness.

**Springfield Downtown Ministry /Council of Churches** — 293 Bridge Street Room 205, Springfield, MA 01103-1402 (737-4125)

Counseling and referrals.

## Gay Community News

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Postmaster: Send address changes to: Gay Community News, 167 Tremont St., 5th Fl., Boston, MA 02111.



# Speaking Out

## Gay Clout: The '84 Democratic Convention

By Michael G. Colantuono and Benjamin Schatz

In 1980 Mel Boozer ran as an openly gay candidate for Vice-President at the Democratic National Convention. He came in second behind Walter Mondale. The Democratic party added a gay rights plank to its platform for the first time at that same convention. These were no gifts from benevolent politicians; they were hard fought victories won by more than eighty openly gay men and lesbians who were delegates to the convention. The existence of a visible and organized gay bloc had a significant impact on the 1980 national convention and on the Democratic party. In addition, local activists from some twenty states had a valuable opportunity to work together and to make their presence known. None of them were from Massachusetts. This year that could change.

The Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance (BLGPA) and the Cambridge Lesbian and Gay Alliance (CLAGA) have formed a joint committee which seeks to elect openly gay men and lesbians as convention delegates from the three Congressional districts which include Boston and many of its suburbs. The group will identify openly gay candidates and urge gay voters to attend the February 5th caucuses to support them. The gay community will need a strong turnout at those caucuses, particularly as other groups will also try to turn out in force. With the support of allies like the National Organization for Women, however, we can have a significant impact — fully ten percent of the 1980 California delegation was openly gay or lesbian.

Some will ask, "Why bother?" There are several reasons. First, this year's election could be very close. A large bloc of gay and lesbian delegates could win important concessions from the party and its nominee if a deadlock develops. Secondly, the 1984 convention is to be held in San Francisco. Gay activists from across the country are planning to demonstrate outside the convention. It would be possible for gays inside the convention hall to use the publicity surrounding the demonstrations and the convention itself to send a powerful message to political leaders who have voted against the interests of our community.

The last reason to make this effort touches closer to home. Politicians take careful note of who shows up at caucuses. A strong gay and lesbian presence may cause otherwise hostile state legislators to think twice before voting anti-gay in the future. The

Massachusetts Gay Rights Bill was killed in the Senate this year by two votes. A strong gay turnout at the Presidential caucuses could make an important difference.

If you're convinced, here's how you can help. First: go to a caucus on February 5th. Each presidential candidate will hold a caucus in each of Massachusetts' eleven Congressional districts. Find out in which caucuses gay candidates are running and go. Any registered Democrat can participate; there is plenty of time to register or to change your registration if you are not currently a registered Democrat. All voters participating in a caucus will be asked to sign a statement that they support the candidate whose caucus they are attending. Don't let this keep you from supporting an openly gay man or lesbian who is running for delegate!

Second: Spread the word! Call your friends, lovers, family, acquaintances, anybody! Get them to the caucus on February 5th. Each candidate will hold his caucus separately. Find out where your caucus is and bring any pro-gay voters you can lay hands on. We do have allies, but it is critically important that we do all we can to get our own voters out.

Finally, you can help by joining the Joint Committee on Delegate Selection or call them for more information. For more information, call Ben Schatz at 266-6139 or Jonathan Handel at 864-3280 (evenings).

Politics is too important to be left to the politicians! It is time for the gay and lesbian communities to take matters into our own hands. The 1984 Democratic National Convention is a good place to start.

**"Speaking Out" is part of our continuing effort to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your ideas, feelings and comments to us and we encourage you to respond to any ideas expressed in this space. Submissions to "Speaking Out" should be TYPED and DOUBLE SPACED, and, if possible, held to under 5 pages in length. The opinions expressed in "Speaking Out" do not necessarily reflect the views of the newspaper, the staff or the advertisers. Write c/o Speaking Out, GCN, 167 Tremont St., 5th Fl., Boston, MA 02111**

## Community Voices

### dplf and sack

Dear GCN,

I am writing this as a member of the Disabled People's Liberation Front because we need the help of the Gay and Lesbian Community.

Many of you may already be aware of the DPLF boycott of the Sack Theatre chain in Boston. If not, here's a brief account of the DPLF's 6-year struggle with the chain and its president, A. Alan Friedberg. Most of the Sack Theatres are inaccessible to wheelchair users and we initiated negotiations to remedy the problem. Sack seemed agreeable to the idea of ramps and/or lifts so we hired an architect so we could come up with the best solution for the least amount of money. Sack suddenly broke off negotiation without apparent cause and the DPLF put up an informational picket. We told Sack we'd take the picket off if they talked. They refused and we took them to courts when they renovated the Beacon Hill Theatre. Sack found some legal loopholes to get around accessibility laws. We lost the case and we appealed. We eventually lost that, too. Meanwhile, the picket went up again urging people to boycott the chain. During the time we were dealing with Friedberg, we have seen or heard some derogatory remarks he made to the press in reference to us. On Channel 4, Friedberg was quoted as saying, "I think they're lucky to go in the back door; that way they don't have to stand in line." On a WBUR interview, "If I give them ramps, they'll be wanting medication and heart machines in there next." In a letter of response to a patron supporting our boycott, "Neither we nor society generally can afford the luxury of failing properly to prioritize in an imperfect society which must look more closely at cost benefit ratios."

Friedberg has had the insensitivity to show *Coming Home* and *Whose Life is it Anyway*, both films of interest to the disabled community, in inaccessible theatres. He also had our picket line harassed by cops where a 59 year old woman protester was thrown across the street and into a paddy wagon. She was arrested for allegedly beating up a cop. What she did was to go to the aid of a man in a wheelchair who the cops were trying to dump out of his chair. The man has a disease that causes him to have very brittle bones. The cops' action could have seriously injured him.

Not too many years ago, Friedberg insulted the Gay Community with the movie *Cruising* and later the Lesbian Community with *Windows*. Gays and Lesbians picketted the Sack showing of these films. The DPLF was also there because we saw us fighting the same enemy — A. Alan Friedberg and his multi-million dollar corporation.

Recently, Friedberg has been investigated by the Attorney General's office for violation of anti-trust laws. It was alleged that he was buying up all the films before other local theatres could bid on them. Friedberg has also wanted to buy out the small local art film theatres like the Orson Welles in Cambridge and the Nickelodeon in Boston.

In October of 1981, a group of disabled people from Fernald School and their supervisors went to a Sack Theatre in Somerville. There was a ramp at that location. They got in and were settled to see the film when a Sack official claimed they were disruptive and ordered them out. He then offered to give them a free showing of the film on a weekend morning. This official even said that one of the people with cerebral palsy looked "Strangelovian." (Dr. Strangelove was spastic and in a wheelchair.) The Fernald people took Sack to court for discrimination and they just lost the case!

On Monday evening, February 13th, the DPLF will be holding a picket at the opening of the newest Sack Theatre in Copley Place. I have read that the interior of this theatre is like a palace — tiled floor, carpeted walls, etc. At the same time that this was being built the Sack in Somerville had expanded to include 4 new screens — *and they removed the wheelchair ramps!*

I strongly urge the Gay and Lesbian Community to come out on February 13 to picket Sack. Remember Friedberg's injustice to us as Gay people and his insults to us. *He is unjust and insulting to disabled people!* Remember our Gay rage at Friedberg for showing *Cruising* and *Windows*. Recapture your rage and come join DPLF in solidarity. As a Gay person, I need you. Our Gay members need you. *We must support each other's struggles to survive or else we'll all lose.*

If you can't come to the February 13th picket there are still things you can do. You can flood Friedberg with letters to demand full accessibility for disabled people. You can also say you support our boycott by refusing to patronize Sack, and/or the concessions if you do go to Sack. The only thing Friedberg understands is *profits*. Tell all your friends about the boycott and urge them to write letters. Write:

A. Alan Friedberg  
Sack Theatres  
141 Tremont St.  
Boston, MA

For more information, you can call us at 825-7704.

In Gay Struggle,  
Linda Gwizdak  
Allston, MA

### "positive" gay image?

Dear GCN and Readers:

We were wondering what your reaction was to David's "public" celebration! Please let us hear from you and your readers, and anyone who would like to comment.

Dear Mr. Scondras,

We, the South Shore Gay and Lesbian Alliance, think the behavior at your victory celebration could have been done in better taste.

You didn't have to FLAUNT your sexuality in front of the T.V. cameras.

We would not expect behavior of this kind from a straight candidate. We are trying to project a positive gay image to the straight community and the behavior we saw at your victory celebration in front of the T.V. media was less than desirable.

We question if the incident might hurt you or any other gay candidates' chances to win future elections?

We welcome your reply to this letter and also open up our meeting as a forum for you to rebutt this criticism at ANY future date.

Respectfully,  
A. Kent, Secretary  
S.S.G.L.A.  
P.O. Box 712  
Bridgewater, MA 02324

### hustled every day

Dear GCN:

Just finished the latest issue of GCN (Vol. II, No. 21) and there are a couple of things that I'd like to respond to.

First off, I must say that the article "Sexual Politics of Crime: Inside and Out," was excellent. People on the streets seem to forget all about the gay brothers and the lesbian sisters who, for whatever reason, are stuck behind these walls and bars. I have been locked up for just over five years now and I've placed several ads in this paper. Not once have I received a response. I can understand that the first thing that goes through peoples' minds when they see a prisoner's ad is that he (the prisoner) is just looking for someone to hustle. Granted, that is the case for some but, and I emphasize the but, that ain't true for all. There's a lot of gay and bi people who are all alone, getting fucked over by guards and inmates, who just want someone that they can rap with. All you fags and dykes out there who are constantly preaching about unity and solidarity, heed what I say. We will *never* be together until you remember those of us in these funky assed prisons. If you write one and you feel that he or she is trying to put the make on you, all you have to do is stop writing. I mean damn, you get hustled every day of your life. A *prisoner* can do you nothing!

I have been bi since I was twelve years old when I went to a motel with the first gay man I had ever met. When I entered the prison system, the first thing that I did was choose an old man to take care of me. I did this by choice but I've watched a lot of kids come in who weren't given a choice. Three or four other inmates would get him in the back of the dorm or in the shower and take turns fucking him. After they were done the kid had three choices of what to do. 1) He could go to the man and turn the dudes in. If he did this, not only would the free people harass him, he would be branded a "rat" and his life in prison would be a constant fight. 2) He could extract retribution himself. If he kills one or two, he goes to court and catches a life sentence for murder. But he isn't bothered any more. His third choice is to pick an old man. In this type of relationship, the kid assumes the role of "wife" and all the responsibilities that go with that title. The old man protects him and makes sure his "wife" has all of the things that she needs.

Myself, I was lucky, in that the man that I chose was a decent person. If that kid chooses someone who isn't all right, his life will be hell. He will end up having to give his ass to all of the dude's buddies AND will probably have to sell his head and ass. The kid gets caught in a Catch-22 where anything that he will do to try to change what is happening will just fall back in his lap. He can and will be sold, given away, and in every way totally degraded. By the time that he gets released, his mind is totally fucked up and he just won't be able to function on the streets. Is that JUSTICE?

Any time that the "system" puts kids 18, 19, 20 years old who only have maybe five years to do with older people who have been locked up for years and still have years to go, that system cannot expect the kid to be rehabilitated. All the experience does is build up a hatred that someday explodes. Being raped and forced to live as I have described changes your whole personality. In most cases, the kids can't even look at themselves without feeling shame. I personally knew a little guy who was so filled with shame after he was raped by six pricks that he hung himself. *The kid was 18 goddamn years old and he only had three years to do!* His charge was having a bag of weed

and they put him with rapists and murderers. Will someone PLEASE tell me what kind of JUSTICE that's supposed to be?

You peole out there who think you have problems, try picking up a pen and answering one of the ads in this paper. Take the time to hear first hand just what kind of bullshit that we have to put up with. Try to give the prisoners a sympathetic ear and a helping hand. You would definitely be surprised, believe me.

As I've said already, I've tried to find someone to write for almost five years. I'm going to try one more time. I KNOW that somewhere out there, there is someone who has a little spare time they can give to me. I don't want nothing from you but some understanding and intelligent conversation. I quit hustling when I was 18 years old. I'm 25 now and don't mess with that kind of shit any more. Write me and you'll find out that I speak the truth.

Thank you,  
James W. Smith II  
#90563 W.C.I. L-2  
Rt. 2 Box 500  
Angie, LA 70462

### tv-ts contact group

Dear GCN

The United States Transvestite-Transsexual Contact Service, which shares space with the *Northwest Passage*, the leading alternative publication on the West Coast, has been functioning for about 2 years now. A network system has been needed for a long time for all the TVs, TSs, she-males, female impersonators in the country.

Aided in our project by the Female Impersonator News, PO Box N, Belmar NJ 07719, who produce the main newspaper for tv's and ts's that circulates nationally, we offer the chance of contacting others of like mind.

Getting stories in national papers is a problem, but still we have become well enough known that we get some 100 calls per day (some from pranksters, of course).

Gateway Gender Alliance, based in Tulare, California, is the national organization for heterosexual tv's. We deal with them on a limited basis since our people are gay oriented. We also have womyn members and couples. You'd be surprised how many womyn want to meet feminine males.

Yours truly,  
Phil Salem,  
US TV-TS Contact Service,  
1017B East Pike St.,  
Seattle WA 98122.

### DOUBLE SPACE YOUR LETTERS!!!

GCN publishes all the letters it receives, unedited, on a space-available basis, unless they contain personal attacks. Anonymous letters will not be published, but names will be held upon request. Address letters to:

Community Voices, *Gay Community News*, 167 Tremont St., 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02111.



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# AIDS Reportability: Confiding in Government

By Christine Guilfooy

BOSTON — Massachusetts has moved one step closer to the permanent institution of mandatory reporting of AIDS cases by physicians.

On November 8, 1983, an emergency regulation went into effect requiring the reporting of AIDS. At a Jan. 4 public meeting regarding the measure, continued mandatory reporting was recommended by individuals testifying at the meeting. It was also decided, at the urging of the Governor's Task Force on AIDS, that AIDS cases be reported on a form different from the one currently used to report cases of venereal disease.

AIDS is now one of only six diseases which physicians must report to the Department of Public Health (DPH). The other five are all sexually transmitted diseases. According to Public Health Commissioner Bailus Walker, Jr., the Department of Public Health will create a new classification for AIDS cases "to recognize the fact that AIDS does not appear to be transmitted only through sexual contact."

To date, according to DPH figures, there have been 46 cases of persons with AIDS in the Commonwealth and about half of them have died.

Larry Kessler, chairperson of the Boston AIDS Action Committee, told GCN that the committee favors the mandatory reporting of AIDS cases for documentation, funding and epidemiological purposes. "We have to document that the number of cases is real, a lot of people don't believe it. We need to prove that it is a real issue. The disease is so new, we have to document how it is travelling and where we are heading. [The reportability requirement will be used to] back up requests for research money, money for funding patient services and for education of health personnel."

The reportability requirements will also ensure that persons are not counted twice or not counted at all. Because AIDS cases are counted in the state where the diagnosis is made, the requirements will shed more light on how many people with AIDS moved here to obtain better medical treatment.

Reportability will have some indirect positive effects in that it will provide a mechanism for getting information to patients about their rights to services such as social security benefits.

While most persons involved with AIDS work are pleased with the reportability requirements, there may be some apprehension regarding the use of names. Kessler told GCN that he believes adequate safeguards are in place and that the need for names is a legitimate one, outweighing any risks.

"I can understand the paranoia of the gay community but [we] have to get past that," said Kessler. "If you keep playing your cards too close to the vest, we will be the victims. You have to get on with getting to the cause of this thing. We can't cripple the system by saying that there should be no names anywhere."

## Media Fund

Continued from page 1

news by computer. Pinney cited Earthscan, a service providing Third World news coverage, as an example. "We'd be able to get quotes from gay leaders right into the newsroom," notes Pinney. "You don't guarantee it gets onto an editor's terminal. He still has to push the right button. So we can't do it electronically; it's a question of consciousness-raising among

Kessler also cited a study which indicated that, for hospitalized persons, 75 people may have access to their name and records.

Contacted by GCN, Ken Mayer, an infectious disease specialist involved in AIDS work, said that he also saw reporting as reasonable and necessary.

John Narkunas of the DPH's Division of Communicable and Venereal Diseases told GCN that physicians send information on reportable cases directly to him and that he files them in a locked file to which only he has access. From there, the names are coded and information along with the code are sent to the Centers for Disease Control.

The change in reportability regulations may be having national ramifications also. The CDC recently released figures which indicated a drop in newly reported AIDS cases for the final quarter of 1983.

Peter Drotman, M.D., of the CDC told GCN that he believes that the changes in reportability regulations such as those occurring in Massachusetts and other states may be playing a part in the drop in cases. Before the change, cases were reported by physicians directly to the CDC, they now are going through local and state agencies and then on to the CDC. The additional steps may thus be causing a delay in reporting.

Drotman also speculated that the number of cases may be levelling off, although he cautioned this cannot be concluded for another three to six months. Drotman bases his speculation on the characteristic pattern that many diseases take — "slow start, rapid rise and gradual levelling off" — which he says AIDS seems to be following. Drotman stressed that such interpretation is speculation at this point.

In a speech before an AIDS conference for physicians in Boston on January 9 and 10, Larry Kessler said, "It will be difficult to convince people that this crisis is still among us when governmental officials announce prematurely that the number of new cases has declined. Quite frankly, I don't believe they have. Here in Massachusetts, contrary to statements from the public health department, we are still on the increase with some 15 new cases being presented in the last two months. In New York where the CDC claims the number of cases has levelled off to 40 a month, the Gay Men's Health Crisis did intakes on 120 newly-diagnosed men in the same period of time that CDC accounts for 60."

Mark Chataway, a spokesperson for Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York, told GCN, "We wish the number of cases were decreasing but the number of our new patients is rising. [We regard the CDC quarterly figures] as a fluke in reporting."

He also said that a large number of cases were reported to CDC during the latter part of December, probably indicating some of the cases had been bottlenecked.

Kessler concluded in his speech,

the editors as well." But such a venture would be extremely expensive, and is years in the future for the group.

But the Media Fund is "making gay people aware of the ways in which the mainstream media is treating gay issues." The "Talk Back" program includes a discussion of AIDS coverage ("The media seemed to forget the disease

"You and I cannot let people in Atlanta, Washington or Boston claim that AIDS has peaked, levelled off, or is over until in fact, it is over."

Drotman told GCN that the CDC has received reports of 1,366 deaths out of the approximately 3,000 AIDS cases reported since 1981.

Kessler told GCN that the Boston AIDS conference generated some discussion about a recent study reported in the *New England Journal of Medicine* concerning AIDS and blood transfusions.

According to the CDC, 38 people have developed AIDS who were not from high risk groups but who had received blood transfusions. Of this group, 18 persons were studied and the blood donations were traced back to the donors.

Kessler told GCN that the research indicates that "there probably is an asymptomatic carrier state."

In a news release from the American Medical Association, Joseph Bove, a professor of medicine at Yale University, is quoted as saying that the incidence of transfusion-related cases of AIDS is relatively small and that the issuing of new guidelines in March 1983 are considered adequate to safeguard the current blood supply. Because of the incubation period, however, new cases of transfusion-associated AIDS may continue to appear.

The new guidelines ask "sexually active homosexual or bisexual males with multiple partners" and persons who have been "sexual partners of an individual at increased risk" to refrain from donating.

Ken Mayer told GCN that he interprets the findings to "underscore the voluntary self removal of any [gay man] who has been sexually active in recent years."

In terms of the current guidelines, Mayer said that he considers them to be appropriate and further cites one case from CDC suggesting that AIDS could have a latency of up to five years. "I think it's better to err on the side of caution. We tend to talk in terms of two years. But if somebody is sexually active five years ago outside of a monogamous relationship, even that may be a gray zone. I think it's better not to give."

In his speech before the AIDS conference, Kessler stressed to the physicians in attendance the necessity of using a team approach in treatment of persons with AIDS. Kessler told GCN that the person with AIDS is best served by "the physician, patient and community (those involved in AIDS work such as with the AIDS Action Committee) working cooperatively."

Kessler also emphasized the positive and constructive work being done in the gay community around AIDS and the need to further this work. He told GCN that San Francisco General Hospital has set aside a floor for persons with AIDS which successfully employs the team approach model.

as soon as it discovered it") as well as Jerry Falwell's description of gay baths as "filthy holes in iniquity" that would wreak "an uncontrollable plague" on the general population.

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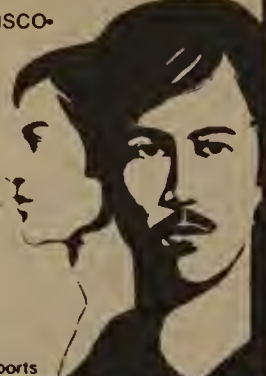
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## Rights Bill

Continued from page 3

just. And in any case, regardless of what the majority of the population might in fact want, I think therefore that it's critical that we get the law, the sooner the better....

I think it's real important that the state of Massachusetts make a very clear statement: we are against discrimination based on sexual preference. And that has to affect the way people think, even if it's just a little seed that's planted in their brains that won't germinate for a while, it's there, and it's going to affect them. When discrimination isn't allowed, there will be places and times where openly gay and lesbian people will get jobs or opportunities they might not otherwise have had, and then people will come into contact with more lesbians and gay men, and that's what will make things change....

I believe it's important that our

community have a diversity of political approaches. I think it has been a strength and not a weakness. But each of those different factions within our community has to realize that they will be affecting, sometimes adversely, the others.

**LG:** And there was an interesting confrontation brought about when the amendment about NAMBLA was added. Suddenly a more radical part of the community was very upset at what they saw as a more mainstream part of the community. There was a conflict; they had to decide if they were going to come out against the bill because of that amendment. They didn't want to interfere with your strategy, but they didn't want the bill to interfere with their rights.

**AI:** There is, as evidenced in GCN, a diversity of opinion on

that particular subject. And there are a lot of people who clearly did not welcome that amendment and didn't want it to be there. We had to struggle with the issue. The Mass. Gay Political Caucus represents the gay community, and we discussed endlessly what our responsibilities are, who we represent, what we represent. When there are divisions in the community, which part of the community do we represent, do we have the right to decide one way or the other, who are we to do that? And there was a lot of brainstorming about that, and soul-searching. That particular issue, though, became an easy question for us to answer because...the amendment that was added about NAMBLA was, we were later informed, so blatantly unconstitutional that it would never, in fact, become law. And that made it a lot easier for us.



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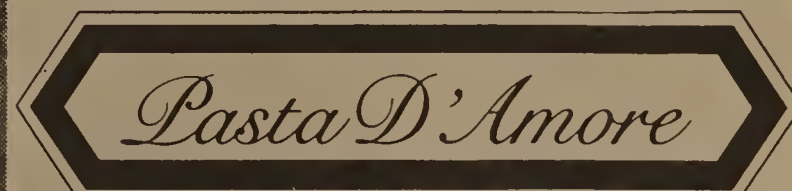
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# Streisand's *Yentl*: Not Enough Challenge

**Yentl.** Directed by Barbra Streisand. Written by Barbra Streisand and Jack Rosenthal. Based on the story by I.B. Singer. Music by Michel Legrand. Lyrics by Alan and Marilyn Bergman. With Barbra Streisand, Amy Irving, Mandi Patinkin. At the Sack Charles.

A Dialogue  
By Andrea Loewenstein and Michael Bronski

**Andrea:** I felt distinctly disappointed in *Yentl*, but it could have been partly because I was expecting too much after hearing you

## Andrea: When I was watching *Yentl* I felt invisible as a lesbian.

and Walta talk about it. I expected to like it, I was all ready to like it, but I just didn't. There I was all ready with my handkerchief that you told me to bring, and I didn't even need it.

**Michael:** Well, I had the opposite experience. When I first saw it I wasn't expecting to like it very much, actually, but I was won over by it. I've seen it three times now. What didn't you like?

**Andrea:** Well, I think what bothered me the most was that even though there was some playing around with sexual reversals, cross-dressing, I thought the overall message was a real paean to heterosexuality, and I say that because when Yentl dressed as a man and Avigdor was attracted to her, it could only be because she was really a woman, and the same thing with Hadass and Yentl. It was presented as a biological imperative that it's only possible to be attracted to the opposite sex. "That is how human beings are constructed. The end." I think that idea was pushed through the whole movie; there wasn't one mention, not any possibility, that people of the same sex might be attracted to each other. I'm not asking for a homosexual movie, but I think to totally ignore it in this context, where it is, has got to be, very much in the air was just very disturbing to me

**Michael:** I agree with you about the relationship between Yentl, who at that point was Anshul, and Avigdor. But I think that the relationship between Yentl and Hadass was a little bit different in that I think Hadass does fall in love with someone she thinks is a man but it's presented as if she's falling in love with her because of what would normally be thought of as more womanly feelings or actions coming from this person.

**Andrea:** But I thought that later, when Yentl and Avigdor are riding in the carriage, that gets explained away also. Yentl says really clearly, almost as if she's

## Andrea: I found myself wondering if Barbra Streisand had lost so much touch, with all her rich houses, that she couldn't imagine that there were some people who didn't live like that.

reassuring the audience, "No, that wasn't really love, she made a mistake." In other words, it was just friendship and Hadass was too innocent to know the difference. You know, "Don't be disturbed by this, it couldn't have been love because I'm a woman too and everyone knows such things don't exist."

**Michael:** Right, except that's

undercut by the scene in which Hadass tells Yentl that she wants to go to bed with her. The way it's directed and performed, it's clearly a very hot sexual scene, at least

## Andrea: For everything slightly challenging or disturbing in this movie there is an immediate out.

on Hadass' part. There's no ambivalence there. In fact, she almost begins to force him, she even tricks him into legally having

expected that much from Hollywood movies, so if there's one thing I can relate to, I latch onto that, and if I'm enjoying it, sometimes I'm not pushed to want

very much more from it.

**Andrea:** Well, what was it that you related to in *Yentl*?

**Michael:** What I related to basically, and I think it's something that gay people have always related to in film, is the image of someone with a secret to hide who's in love with someone else and can't tell that secret. It's very emblematic, very suggestive of things that many gay people go through. I agree that in 1983 Barbra Streisand should have had enough smarts to make a more explicit movie. But still, that undertone was what I got caught up in, what I found so moving.

**Andrea:** You mean the intensity of the secret?

**Michael:** The intensity and being in love with someone and not being able to tell them. In a way, that's a very old gay way of viewing movies, where you go and you see Rita Hayworth in love with

she was bending over backwards not to touch her.

**Michael:** By "she" do you mean the character or the director?

**Andrea:** Well, the director directed the character to act that way! In other words, Barbra directed herself.

**Michael:** But that character would act that way in that situation.

**Andrea:** I don't think so, I really don't. It made me think about lots

## Michael: What I related to basically, and I think it's something gay people have always related to in film, is the image of someone with a secret to hide who's in love with someone else and can't tell that secret.

of accounts I've read about women who dressed as men, married women and satisfied them sexually, without anyone knowing the difference. And they led happy lives together. And then if the woman did find out, say she saw a real man naked or something, she usually still wanted the secret kept! In fact, that would probably have been a more natural thing to

have been allowed to notice that they were being sexual. But I bet those Talmudic scholars got away with a lot. You always can if you just don't call it sexual. That's what a lot of ex-nuns I've talked to did for sex. They went ahead and just didn't call it that. But in any case, sexuality aside, two women just do touch. I mean straight women, friends, whatever. So it wasn't realistic that they didn't in the movie, it was in order not to upset us. That's one of the things I mean by prudish.

**Michael:** Well, it's true that if they had done it the other way it would have been much more daring. I think the only movie I've seen where they approach it the other way is in *Some Like It Hot*, where throughout the whole movie Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis are dressed as women and Joe E. Brown falls in love with Jack Lemmon as a woman. And finally Tony Curtis ends up marrying Marilyn Monroe and Joe E. Brown is still there with Jack Lemmon. So at the end Jack Lemmon rips off his wig and says, "You don't understand, I'm a man!" And Joe E. Brown looks at him and says, "Well, nobody's perfect." Which for 1958 is shocking. It throws sexual identity right out the window.

**Andrea:** Well, *Yentl* sure doesn't do that. Anyway, I want to tell you why else I thought it was prudish. There is a lot of sexuality, but nothing ever happens. Here's this woman, Hadass, panting for somebody to make love to her from the beginning and all through the whole movie she never gets it until the end. It's a real tease. And also two or three times a character strips and the other character gets to see that person's body, but we don't. I mean, we wouldn't necessarily even be thinking about seeing their bodies in the first place, but here's this other character on the screen who is, and we're left out of it. It's this preoccupation with sex, but nobody will ever get any and we won't even let you see. I found it extremely irritating.

**Michael:** Yes, it plays on the tradition of titillation, which comes from when you weren't allowed to show anything. You want to market the movie as widely as possible and you can't show anything. So it's very strategic. In this movie you create a constant state of sexual tension. It's a technique that's always been used.

**Andrea:** Well, you keep talking about it as a Hollywood movie,

## Michael: Don't you think for some isolated women somewhere who happen to see this movie...don't you think it would affect some people?

pect from these characters, who were supposed to have spent their lives studying the Talmud, where that would have been completely, absolutely forbidden?

**Andrea:** Well, sure, they wouldn't

but in the interviews with Barbra Streisand she doesn't act as though it's just this typical Hollywood movie which everyone knows is about making money. Instead, she says it's supposed to

Continued on page 16



Amy Irving and Barbra Streisand.

in things like cross-dressing in a movie in the first place. But then if you do, not even to bring up the issue of homosexuality.... I

Dana Andrews and you identify with the woman. And in a case like this where the woman has a secret — and then the sexuality — well, there's the whole secret subtext to it all. And especially since I think this movie is very well made, it's easy to get drawn in, to relate at that level.

**Andrea:** Well, maybe I didn't get drawn in since I'm not a part of that particular tradition. Instead, I felt annoyed during much of the movie.

**Michael:** Why annoyed?

**Andrea:** Well, for one thing I found it prudish in several different ways. I found the sexuality in it, which was certainly there, a real tease. For instance, the way Yentl treated Hadass: I mean she wouldn't even kiss her on the lips, she wouldn't even put her arms around her and, again, it was as if Barbra was saying, "Hey, look, world, I'm straight." It was as if

mean even if you had dismay on the part of the characters — "Oh, no, I'm attracted to someone of the same sex!" — that would be more than you have here. When I was watching *Yentl* I felt invisible as a lesbian.

**Michael:** I see that, but I think I went into the movie on a different level. Over the years I just haven't



## Boston Asian Gay Men and Lesbians

By Warren Blumenfeld

There are some Asian languages which do not have a term to express the concept of homosexuality, thus creating an oppression by silence. This, coupled with a prevailing attitude in this country that Asian lesbians and gay men are rare, keeps many people isolated and out of touch with their sexuality.

The organization Boston Asian Gay Men and Lesbians (BAGMAL) was formed in the summer of 1979 to help break this isolation and to provide members with a forum in a safe and supportive environment to share experiences and concerns about being gay, lesbian and Asian.

Siong-Huat Chua is a gay man from Southeast Asia who is one of the group's co-founders. He said he helped to start an organization specifically designed for Asians to come and share opinions and creativity and support those who are coming out. He hopes that through the group's efforts, Asian gays and lesbians will achieve greater visibility within both the Asian and gay communities.

BAGMAL originally met at the Glad Day Bookshop in Boston. Posters announcing group meetings were placed in bars, at GCN and other gay-run businesses and gradually membership began to grow.

Today meetings are held at different members' homes, usually on the first weekend of each month. They are informal and social in nature where people share food and chat and sometimes particular topics are discussed. In the past, topics have focussed on coming out to family members, sexual identity vs. ethnic identity, relationships with the local Chinese community and coming out stories.

Members come from a wide range of Asian backgrounds including Chinese, Japanese, Southeast Asian and Indian as well as those of mixed Asian and Amerasian parentage. Some members were born overseas while others are native to this country. Currently there are between 30 and 35 people on the BAGMAL mailing list, of which approximately six are women.

## Local Niches

The group has two unofficial officers, including a treasurer who takes care of the dues and bills and a secretary who keeps the minutes of the meetings when necessary and sends out the short newsletter announcing meetings and future activities.

In addition to their monthly meetings, BAGMAL sponsors other types of activities, including speaking engagements where members travel to various community organizations. A few years ago they were invited to conduct an in-house training session on the needs of Asian lesbians and gays for the medical and counseling staff at the Southcove Health Center in Boston's Chinatown. For many at the Center, this was their first formal discussion on the topic of homosexuality and the results were said to

have been quite positive.

BAGMAL also sponsors events specifically designed for the gay and lesbian community. During Lesbian and Gay Pride Week in the summer of 1982, they held a forum on being gay and Asian at the Arlington Street Church. Group members told a little about themselves and what their needs are as Asians. This was followed by questions from those assembled in the audience.

Also in 1982, they gave a "come-meet-us" party downstairs at the Paradise Cafe in Cambridge for people to come and eat, dance and learn more about the group.

A good time is had by all when members attend social and cultural events together. Some went to a screening of the movie *Freckled Rice*, which is the story of a young Chinese-American boy growing up in Boston. Members also attend the Asian American Resource Workshop, which profiles art created by foreign and American-born Asian artists.

For the past two summers, BAGMAL has formed a contingent at the annual Lesbian and Gay Pride March in Boston. There Asian gays and lesbians from many nationalities have marched side by side under one banner which proudly displays the group's name in English and Chinese.

*Continued on back of Calendar section*

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Niches

Continued from front of Calendar section

BAGMAL member Vickie Leu is a Chinese-American born in San Francisco. She enjoys the social climate of the group. "It's nice to meet new people," she said, "and it's reassuring to know there are other Asian lesbians and gays around."

In talking to others she feels that gay oppression is extremely severe on the overseas-born members. "Homosexuality is not recognized in

many non-Western countries," she concludes. "There is no such thing as 'being out' in Asia."

Siong-Huat Chua shares this opinion but emphasizes that though it may be easier to come out as a gay person in some Western countries, the forms of homophobia here are more violent in nature.

BAGMAL organizers cite among the group's greatest achievements the development of friendship networks of the membership. Strong

relationships have been built up between people in the group.

The group intends to continue and expand its role of providing aid and support to Asian lesbians and gays and encourages new people to contact them. Says Siong-Huat Chua, "We are a part of the community and we have a stake in it. Our group is here to build something new."

BAGMAL can be reached in care of Glad Day Bookshop, 43 Winter Street, Boston, MA 02108. Phone (617) 542-0144.

Notes

Compiled by Michael Bronski ,

and Jeremy Grainger.

More Women

The Boston Area Rape Crisis Center is seeking to expand its numbers to include more women of color and more women over the age of 35 in the collective. The Crisis Center believes "there are needs and concerns specific to women of color that cannot adequately be addressed without sufficient representation within the organization."

A one-year commitment involves extensive training and being available one night per week. Annual training begins Monday, February 13, 1984. If interested in getting involved, please call 492-7273 for further information.

JD Superstar

The New Ehrlich Theater will be presenting *The Divine JD*, the second of their new play series, at 8:00 PM on February 5, 6, 12 and 13.

Written by Davis Vincent, *The Divine JD* follows the struggles of the young James Dean to be understood, to keep his artistic integrity and to fight off the stranglehold of the film industry (which, as Thelma Ritter said in *All About Eve*, "That has everything except the bloodhounds yapping at her rear end."). It will be interesting to see how, and if, the play deals with Dean's (you know) *personal* life. A \$3.00 donation is suggested.

Gay (Staged) Theater

Meridian gay theater will be beginning their winter series of staged readings on January 30 and 31 with Jeff Hagedorn's *Should Have Been a Love Play*. A runner-up in the international playwrighting contest, *Should Have Been* tells the story of Michael and Jeff, who are perfect for one another; they may even have become lovers if they have ever really met. Billed as a comedy, but sounds like a slice of life. The reading series will take place at the Sandol Theater, 137 West 22nd St., NY. Admission is free, seating is limited, and reservations are suggested. The shows begins at 8:00 PM.

Sci-Fi Fest

SF3, a Wisconsin-based science fiction club, will be sponsoring a convention, **WisCon**, February 24 to 26 at the Concourse Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin.

The guests of honor will be writer **Elizabeth Lynn** (*A Different Light*, *The Northern Girl*) and **Jessica Amanda Salmonson** (editor of *Amazons!*). There will be discussions, panels, slide shows and many other features.

WisCon claims to have six times as much feminist programming as any other conference and at least twice as much non-feminist: something for everyone. More information can be obtained from SF3, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701-1624 or by calling (608) 251-6226 (days) or (608) 233-0326 (evenings).

High Notes: Opera

**Boston Concert Opera** will present the New England premiere of Leos Janacek's *Jenufa*. Presented in English, *Jenufa* will be performed at Jordan Hall, 30 Gainsborough Street, Boston, at 8:00 PM on Friday, January 20, and at 7:30 PM on Sunday, January 22. Call 536-1166 for ticket prices and more information.

The **Boston Conservatory** will re-open the newly renovated Boston Conservatory Theater with two new productions: *Doctor Miracle* by Bizet and *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* by Ravel, two one-acts to be performed the same evening. The opera will be presented at 8:00 PM Friday through Sunday, January 27 through 29. The Conservatory is located at 31 Hemenway Street, Boston. Call 536-6340 for prices and more info.

Homomovies

The Somerville Theater will be screening the New England premiere of Scott B and Beth B's *Vortex* on January 20 through 26. A hit at the New York Film Festival, *Vortex* is a thriller punk-rock film noir and probably several other things. It stars **Lydia Lunch** (who gained acclaim for her parody of Judy Chicago's *Dinner Party*, imprudently entitled *Box Lunch*). The film has been compared to *Liquid Sky*, which should either make you rush out and see it or stay at home.

The Somerville will also be showing two great sex break-through movies (is that like a break dance movie?): *Last Tango in Paris* and *In the Realm of the Senses*. These films have probably done more to re-conceive the notions of sex and the cinema than any in the past 20 years. They will be programmed Sunday through Thursday, January 29 through February 2.

Winter at Passim's

Feminist folksinger/songwriter **Cathy Winter** will appear at Passim's Coffee House in Cambridge on Thursday, January 26.

As a soloist in the early 1970s, Winter's slide guitar and solid blues style earned her places on stages with Papa John Creach, Spider John Koerner and Paul Geremia. In 1975, she teamed up with Boston-area favorite Betsy Rose for a seven-year partnership that brought the duo national recognition among feminist, folk and progressive circles for high-quality songwriting, intricate harmonies and power-packed concerts.

Winter returns to the Boston area again as a solo artist for this gig at Passim's with a collection of new and original material that promises to give us a heart-warming evening of progressive musical storytelling. Call Passim's for more information: 492-7679.

Quick Gay Guide

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Boston Area (617)

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Black Men-White Men Social/Support Group c/o GCN, Box 1, 167 Tremont St. Boston 02111  
Black Men's Assoc., PO Box 827, Boston 02123  
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Boston Asian Gay Men & Lesbians c/o Glad Day Bookshop, 43 Winter St. Boston, 02108 542-0144  
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Project Place, 32 Rutland St. 02118 267-9150  
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Civil Liberties Union of Mass. 482-3170 47 Winter St., 02108  
GLAD (Gay & Lesbian Advocates and Defenders) 100 Boylston Suite 900 Boston, 02116 426-1350  
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WOMEN

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Metropolitan Community Church 523-7664  
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Unitarian Universalists Office of Lesbian/Gay Concerns 25 Beacon St., Boston 02108 742-2100

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Lesbian and Gay Media Advocates (LAGMA) c/o GCN, 167 Tremont, 02111  
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Gay AlAnon (families of alcoholics) 843-5300  
North Shore Gay and Lesbian Counseling Program (non-profit) 744-5322  
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# Solid Politics, Solid Talent, Solid Songs

**Solid Ground:** Karen Kruskal, Kathy Moore, Carol Pierson, Jan Thyer. Produced by Susan Abod. Susan Abod, bass on "Healing Rhythms." Engineering by Perry Carter, Melanie Berzon and Margo Garrison. Mastering by Perry Carter. Recorded at WGBH, Boston and at District 65, UAW. Cover photo: Bill Fried. Available at New Words Bookstore in Cambridge, or by sending \$8.00 to Solid Ground, 11 Hall Ave., Somerville, MA 02144.

By Nancy Wechsler

If you're looking for sensitive and class-conscious, down-home feminist folk music, pick up a copy of the recently released cassette *Solid Ground* by the Boston-area women's group of

spirit, melodies and powerful words. The songs on this tape deal with women's relationships to each other, their mothers, fathers, children, co-workers, bosses, unions, landlords and social movements.

The members of Solid Ground — Karen Kruskal, Kathy Moore, Carol Pierson and Jan Thyer — do not play music for a living. Karen is a public interest lawyer, Carol works as an assistant radio manager at WGBH, Jan is a word processor, and Kathy is a graphic artist. I believe all the women are either mothers or involved in raising children. And three of them are lesbians.

If you are familiar with Solid Ground, it is probably because you have heard them play at local

**It's the spirit of the early women's movement, as well as the range of topics sung about and a class consciousness that is woven throughout many of the songs that make this tape special.**

the same name. This isn't a slick or flashy production and some of the songs work a lot better than others, but what it lacks in polish it more than makes up for in

rallies and demonstrations, or perhaps you have caught them at Modern Times Cafe in Cambridge. If you haven't heard them yet, you have only about six more



Karen Kruskal, Kathy Moore, Carol Pierson and Jan Thyer (left to right) of Solid Ground.

months to see them in person. Carol and Jan say they are moving to California (and who could blame them after this winter), so the group will come to an end, at least for now. Solid Ground is one of my favorite local groups, and knowing they wouldn't be playing together much longer, I was incredibly glad to hear they had

made a tape. It was with great excitement that I ordered a copy. Would it capture the spirit and talent of the group, I wondered as I slipped it into my cassette player. The simple answer was, yes, it did.

My favorite songs on the record are those written by Kathy Moore ("Promises," "Stealin'," "One More Dawn," "Paper Globe"

and "Lovesong"). Group member Karen Kruskal has also written a beautiful song which the group has included ("Healing Rhythms") and another ("Susan B. Anthony") was written collectively by all four women. In addition, the tape includes the works of: Ginni Clemens ("Solid

*Continued on page 17*

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If you have already had hepatitis B, you may not need the vaccine. It's even possible that you may have contracted a mild form of the disease without knowing it. A simple and relatively inexpensive screening can determine whether you already have the hepatitis B antibody, or if you should consider getting the vaccine. So visit your doctor, your local gay clinic, or a community health center and ask about the hepatitis B screening and vaccine. And if you can, consider making a donation so that those who can't afford the expensive treatment can stay healthy too.

*In Boston, the hepatitis B screening and vaccine is available from the Fenway Community Health Center, which maintains a fund to provide grants and loans to those who cannot afford the vaccine. For more information, or to make a contribution to the fund, call the Fenway Community Health Center at (617) 267-7573.*

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BY

Rhonda R. Rivera, of  
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# Religious Illusions, Atheist Spirituality

By Michael C. Botkin

Atheists, because we reject the obvious folly of believing supernatural beings run our lives, are often assumed to be "anti-spiritual." That is, if we reject god, we must be rejecting the soul as well.

A well-adjusted atheist doesn't deny spirituality. Rather, she denounces its perversion and

tion and a perception. A person speaks of her soul when feeling herself to be more than just a sum of her parts, a blob of protoplasm. Feeling spiritual means feeling "more than yourself," somehow connected with forces greater and more significant than the mere individual. In this state one can talk to gods, see heaven

is human in origin and religion does far more to suppress than express it.

## Religion

Religions are institutions that define, control and express populations. They serve as a source of identity and are always carefully tailored to the strengths and weaknesses of their populations. Feudal cultures clung to catholicism with its rigid hierarchy and unquestioning faith. Capitalist cultures fostered the growth of protestantism with its work ethic and money worship. In India, the powerful and wealthy but technically lower-caste merchants withdrew from the land-owner-dominated hindu religion to start buddhism, their own merit-based religion. Later, when they united with the land-owners against the peasants, buddha was admitted into the hindu pantheon. The examples are endless and they all serve to underline that religions are cultural and political, not spiritual, institutions.

Religions are dominating institutions. They all assert that the individual is, by herself, insignificant, and can only escape this isolated impotence by giving herself over completely to "god." But "god" is never more than the idealized values of the dominant culture. Dominant religions are usually seen as repressive because they maintain the rule of the few over the many, while dissident religions are often viewed as progressive because they challenge or reject the dominant culture.

But religions have no trouble going from dissident to dominant, and once in state power, all reli-

gions persecute the non-believers and impious. A saddening, extreme example is judaism. A persecuted minority religion for 2,000 years and almost wiped out in death camps, it set up concentration camps of its own within years of coming to state power. Another recent example is islam, where in Iran before the revolution it was seen as the champion of the Third World against imperialism.

Since coming to power, the islamic republic has repressed all forms of minority or local autonomy, and is particularly persecuting women and gays. Religions disagree over which of them get to run our lives, not over whether we get to run them ourselves.

## Neopaganism

The birth of the gay and feminist movements fostered a dissident sub-religion, the goddess-worship of witches and radical fairies. Like every other religion,

which overshadow this lack of faith, such as cultural resistance. But I think we need to experience our spirituality and our resistance directly and consciously and not through the medium of some fake god(dess). To do otherwise is to imitate our oppressors, for it takes more than a sex-change to alter god's tyranny.

## Selfhood

As human beings we must struggle to form, perceive and accept our self/souls/spirits. We must honestly question how we fit into the universe and honestly accept the answers we find. Childish belief in some supernatural parent figure can alleviate some of the loneliness we feel, just as unquestioningly swallowing our culture's notions of how to act, talk, dress, etc., can deaden the responsibility of choosing for ourselves. But true understanding can only come from recognizing and accepting what is within us, and

**Spirituality is attributed to an outside and fictitious source. But in fact it is human in origin and religion does far more to suppress than express it.**

abuse at the hands of the deists.

Spirituality is a feeling that originates from within us. It is one of our nobler sentiments and more powerful drives and as such religion steals it from us and attributes it to god. Then, just as with sex, it is mystified, quarantined and distorted by illogical rules. When these natural human forces have been properly fettered and blindfolded, they can be used as beasts of burden to empower oppressive and parasitic institutions like the family (in the case of sex) or the church (in the case of spirituality). Once an institution has established a monopoly on such a human drive, its existence is assured. This is why proponents of "the family" are so alarmed by any assertion of non-traditional sex-roles, and why deists insist that atheists have no souls.

## Spirituality

Spirituality is a feeling, an emo-

and in general experience many events foreign to ordinary consciousness.

However, this precious ability is clearly not god-given. If a specific god had this spirituality to give, the others would not. But of course christian, muslim, buddhist and judaist are all capable of it, as are drug users and competent meditators. One does not have to look to god for the answer. The perception of the self as not being bound up in the individual is an accurate one—we are indeed part of the massive and majestic cycle of life, one with the stars and the wind, the roaches and the elephants, the dust and the comets. It is deism that insists that "man" is cut off and isolated, a dangerous animal reformable only as much as she lets this external spirituality—controlled by the deists—take her over. Spirituality is attributed to an outside and fictitious source. But in fact it

## Fun-Filled and Passionate

**Passione.** By Albert Innaurato. Directed by Grey Cattell Johnson. With Eric Menyuk, Ed Peed, Ed Yopchick, Ursula Drabik, Lynda Robinson, Paul Dunn, Janet Cicchese. At the Nucleo Eclettico, 216 Hanover Street, North End. Running through February 19.

By Michael Bronski

Albert Innaurato scored his first big hit (actually his only big hit) with *Gemini*, a farce about a working-class Italian boy from Philly who couldn't decide to come out or not and the inevitable explosion when his WASP girlfriend (and her equally WASPy brother, with whom the boy is in love) come from Harvard

to visit the family. It wasn't a bad idea: sex clashes, class clashes, culture clashes and lots of pasta throwing on stage. The only problem was that not only couldn't the boy decide to come out or not, but Innaurato wouldn't let him make up his mind one way or the other. The audience was left hanging in the air and a fairly tight play was left at loose ends.

Innaurato's other plays showed an equally ill-at-ease attitude toward gayness: in *Benno Blimp*, the gay title character is disgustingly gluttonous and ends up literally eating himself; in *Earthworks*, kind-hearted drag queens are counterbalanced by predatory hustlers; and in *Urlicht*,

a (seemingly) gay young man is battered to death by a nun and then pushed in front of a train.

It is with some relief that I report there are no gay characters in *Passione*. (I mean, with playwrights like these, who needs enemies?) *Passione* is a sort of *Gemini Redux*. Forty-five-year-old Berto is having his father Oreste home for the weekend. Berto's son Little Tom and his wife Little Francine, along with Francine's father Renzo, are all going to be there with the rest of the relatives. But suddenly (everything in an Innaurato play is filled with such hysterical passion that it has to happen suddenly)

Continued on page 16



A scene from Albert Innaurato's *Passione*.

dealing with what comes from without. When we accept the fantasies of deism, we deny ourselves the possibilities of true selfhood and spirituality.

A shorter version of this appears in the most recent issue of the *Chicago Men's Gathering Newsletter*, PO Box 11076, Chicago IL 60611.

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# True to Myself: A Song and Dance Routine

We invite readers to submit articles for Coming Out, a series in which lesbians and gay men tell the stories of their individual sexual, social, emotional and political emergence. The articles should be no longer than 1500 words and, if possible, should be typed. Send to Coming Out, GCN, 167 Tremont St., 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02111.

By Gerry Fisher

Try to be enthusiastic about coming out now? I just can't do it!

For Pete's sake, I'm out to all of my close friends and family,

**I couldn't very well have gone to a gay bar. That would have been an admission that would have shaken my delicate belief in my bisexuality.**

with the exception of my father, and with him it will be only a matter of time. The truth is that I've lost patience with my straight counterparts. Too much time and energy is spent attempting to educate them about homosexuality, energy that could best be spent educating myself. Still, I'll have my song and dance routine on hold for all inquisitive friends and acquaintances. My motto: be true to myself and let the straights fall where they may.

All of my coming out woes considered, life is still simpler than it was last February. That month marked the sixth since I had sworn off men. Oh, I had admitted to myself that I was bisexual, but I felt that I could "turn off" my homosexual half. You see, I wanted a wife, 2.2 kids, a house and, above all, the white picket fence; I wanted to be normal.

*I've got a girlfriend with bows in her hair*

*And nothing is better than that... Is it?*

—Talking Heads

What better way to test the old normalcy than to attempt to spark an old flame? It just so happened that an ex-potential girlfriend of mine had decided to attend Boston University and I had con-

vinced myself that I was a major factor in her decision. Always regretting that I had never approached her sexually, I cherished this rare opportunity to put a past mistake to rest and to prove my manhood. To top things off, my old flame was willing.

Unfortunately, without sparks there can be no flame. I simply couldn't get excited about seeing this woman. My lack of enthusiasm followed an old pattern: take the woman out, get excited that I hadn't been turned down, struggle with the infamous good-night kiss and then lose all interest. This fresh failure was as

revealing as it was devastating. I couldn't face my old girlfriend, having failed her for a second time. I couldn't face my friends and their questions about a possible follow-up date. I couldn't face the fact that I had "succeeded" in avoiding men for six months, yet I had been unable to sleep with women. Come to think of it, I couldn't face much of anything.

*Billy Jean is not my lover!  
Billy Jean is not my lover!*

—Michael Jackson

Confused and frightened, I went in search of a quick fix — no questions asked; I returned to the place where I had had my first gay experience, the peep show in the raunchy, X-rated Combat Zone. I couldn't very well have gone to a gay bar. That would have been an admission that would have shaken my delicate belief in my bisexuality. Besides, I had only been in a gay bar once before and that was the earth-shattering event that convinced me to give up men for six months. I remember sitting on the stone benches outside the Boston Public Library, playing tug of war with myself for 45 minutes. Imagining that each man who turned the corner onto Blagden Street was gay, I wondered why I was struggling so. I finally entered the

bar after a huge amount of soulful deliberation. I didn't ever want to think that hard again; mindless and anonymous, the peep shows were an easy way out.

Thankfully, I abandoned the closet-like scene of the Combat Zone after a few visits. Don't

## Coming Out

think that this meant that I was willing to engage myself in soulful deliberation! Denial was the name of my game. While cruising the gay bars for sex, my mind was fervently denying that I was homosexual and that anything at all had changed in my life in the past year. However, a person can live a schizophrenic life for only so long before either the mind or the body suffers. In my case, it was both. My troubled mind was unable to fall asleep at night; I became irritable and my grades dropped significantly. As far as my body was concerned, I developed a case of impetigo — a viral infection resembling leprosy. Not only was my life falling apart, so was my face.

Absolutely convinced that I had AIDS and was dying, I did a lot of crying, a lot of swearing and a lot of desperate plea bargaining. I swore that if I lived, I would never touch another man again.

*Sooner or later, your legs give way, you hit the ground...  
Sooner or later, you hit the deck, you get found out.  
Save it for later, don't run away and let me down.  
You let me down!*

—The English Beat

As you may have guessed, I lived. After singing the blues for a few weeks while my face cleared, I passed my finals and graduated from college. I then experienced a freedom that I had never known before: freedom of choice. I was no longer restrained by ghosts from my past: no one in my family had graduated from college before and I felt that my "debt" to my parents — for their years of loving care — now had been paid. I was free to determine

what, if anything, I owed to myself.

One evening I returned from work, gathered my mail, deposited my belongings and fell backwards onto my bed. Waves of fantasy transformed my room into a psychological Disney World. At one point, I envisioned a handsome man lying next to me. Startled by my benign acceptance of this homosexual fantasy, I snapped back to reality. Playfully, with a smile breaking out across my face, I re-entered my dream and placed a naked woman next to me. Amazed at my complete lack of emotion, I laughed and said aloud, "Jesus Christ! Gerry, you're gay!"

A few weeks later, on a smoldering Saturday morning, I semi-consciously shouted to my roommate that I wouldn't be joining him at the beach. Talk about turmoil! Working 40 hours a week, trips to the beach on weekends were not to be taken lightly. But I had heard something about some kind of a gay parade that was taking place that day in Copley Square. Desperate to meet people in the same situation as myself, I managed to overcome my fears; I reluctantly shuffled out the door. Just in case of a low turnout, I decided to stop at the

*Take your passion and make it happen.*

—Irene Cara

That evening I glowed with pride. It was such a joy to realize that I wasn't alone. Daringly, I wore my parade t-shirt and hat through the streets of Boston and Brookline. One car even honked its horn, the occupants pointing at the shirt. As I entered my apartment, faint voices of my friends placed a damper on my spirits. I had planned on coming out to them but the timing had always been wrong. I clutched my shopping bag to my chest, hiding from my day's activities. I am not really sure what drove me into the kitchen where my friends were without first changing shirts. I guess that it was the intuitive push that made me pass up the trip to the beach that morning. Anyway, I proceeded to drop my bag in front of five of my closest friends.

\*\*\*

Perhaps I was a little bit too hasty when I said earlier that I was tired of educating straights. It's just that coming out to people no longer packs the wallop that it did back in June. But hell, I'm 22 years old; I've got a lot to learn! To me, Stonewall is a nickname for a president; to me, Gerry

**While cruising the gay bars for sex, my mind was fervently denying that I was homosexual and that anything at all had changed in my life in the past year.**

bookstore so that, if bored, I would have something to keep my mind busy. I bought one of the first copies of *Torch Song Trilogy* that the store had dared to stock; then, preparing for the worst, I walked to the Square. Thanks to the tens of thousands of lesbians and gays who were dancing in the streets, I never had a chance to break the binding.

Studds and Harvey Fierstein are heroes. Forgive my impatience and that of my generation; we must seem incredibly ungrateful. It must have been hell to come out 20 years ago. But, older gays and lesbians, remember when you were 22 years old! Styles, faces and fashions may have changed, but I'll bet that the song remains the same.

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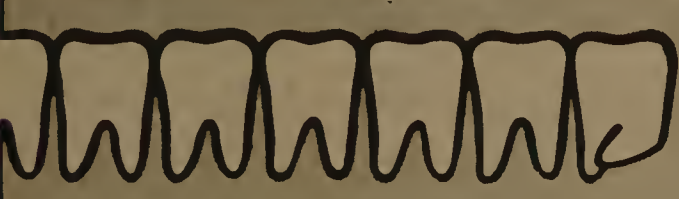
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**Yentl**

*Continued from page 8*

be a movie about Jews, about strong women, a challenge to sex roles.

**Michael:** I can see you're disappointed. I guess I'm more cynical about those interviews than you are. I do think the movie suffers from wanting to be something that it isn't in a time that demands a higher consciousness about sexuality and how people relate to each other. But I think you're missing something. I think that Streisand's version of the movie is very much a fairy-tale vision in which, as Quentin Crisp says, sex doesn't rear its ugly head, even though the movie is obsessed by it. A lot of fairy tales are about children growing up, gaining wisdom. And I think you can see it as a fairy tale about Yentl growing up, maturing, coming to grips with her life and eventually actually becoming her father.

**Andrea:** Huh? Becoming her father?

**Michael:** Yes. Look how first she becomes a man, then she goes to

**Passion**

*Continued from page 14*

Berto's wife shows up, after an eight-year absence, with her very butch sister, to get the furniture she left behind. Once again it's the WASPs vs. the *passione*.

*Passione* is pretty standard Broadway fare. The jokes are funny, the action quick, the family conflicts typical but not without some feeling. The ending is a mite sentimental, but that's all right, nothing of any great importance went on before. What is nice is that Innaurato, who has created some pretty misogynist women characters, has presented, fairly and with sense, three women who are not only great characters, but who make the whole play work. Aggy (Lynda Robinson), the long absent mother, is caught in the dilemma of regretting her leavetaking or enjoying her new found life as a doctor. Instead of playing this rather common problem as monster mother (a la *Kramer vs. Kramer*), Innaurato handles it with restraint (something he generally lacks) and

**Uplinger**

*Continued from page 1*

bit titillated at the prospect of a man propositioning another man. He repeatedly questioned Gardner on whether society should have any right to prohibit harassing solicitations.

Nine *amicus curiae* briefs were filed in the Uplinger case, including briefs from: Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund; the Center for Constitutional Rights; the New York Civil Liberties Union; and the national office of the American Civil Liberties Union; the Bar Association for the City of New York; and the National Committee on Sexual Civil Liberties. A joint brief was filed by the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association and the American Public Health Association maintaining that what the law describes as "deviate sexual intercourse" is not deviate.

Lambda's brief, authored by Rubinfeld, Mary Dunlap and Nan Hunter, focused on two arguments: the right to privacy includes the right to expression of one's sexuality and that the creation of a distinction between deviate and non-deviate sex violates the principle of equal protection.

The Supreme Court's decision is expected in two months. Ron Bogard, a D.C. attorney who is co-chair of the Committee on Lesbian and Gay Rights of the D.C. Bar Association, noted that the court could do at least four things. "They could send it back to the New York appellate court for a clarifying opinion; they could rule

Yeshiva, where she studies scripture, then she even teaches it to a woman as her father taught her and you know that line of his she repeats when Hadas asks her why she's closing the shutters: "I trust God, but not the neighbors."

**Andrea:** I see what you mean. Yes, that's a very good point.

**Michael:** And then at the end she realizes that learning isn't everything, that she has emotions too, and she has to act on them.

**Andrea:** Yeah, and note how she has to learn that from a woman, Hadas. Of course that's what women have to give, emotions, while men are the givers of wisdom.

**Michael:** But the two parts combine in the Yentl character.

**Andrea:** Yes, because she's so special but all the other men and women in the movie have to conform to the good old stereotypes!

**Michael:** Well, that's why you have movie stars!

**Andrea:** But still, Barbra Streisand didn't have to make the character she played such an exception! I've said how for every challenging thing in this movie there's an out and I don't even think we get pushed about sex roles, about seeing women in a different way. I think the out in this case is this character who is this exceptionally sexy, passionate, subservient woman. So it would be easy to come out of the movie thinking that the Yentl character was a charming exception; all the other women were perfectly happy and contented like Hadas. In that *Life* article Amy Irving said, and she meant it positively, that Barbra moved around and played with her like a little doll. And that's the feeling I got from that character.

**Michael:** Although she does wake up and learn, she learns enough Talmud to learn what her rights are.

**Andrea:** The only reason she learns it is to please her husband and get some sex out of him!

*Continued on page 17*

understanding. Francine (Janet Cicchese) is always referred to as "Little Francine," and of course the joke is that she is huge. But Innaurato knows that one fat joke is enough and one of the play's best moments is Francine's soliloquy to her fat: "Is she a little chubby? No. She's FAT. Is she sort of plump, you know, a little fat? No. She's FAT." Francine is funny, abrasive and tenaciously loving of her weak husband (who is called Little Tom not because he is *not* fat, but because he is a wimp). The third woman, Sarah (Ursula Drabik), is Aggy's downhome (North Carolina) sister, who has 200 acres, a good-for-nothing husband and a hankering to meet these macho Italian city slickers on their own territory. Verging somewhere between butch-dyke and mountain woman, Sarah uses the stereotypical mannerisms without ever falling into a joke.

*Passione* is fun to watch. Innaurato's slap-stick shenanigans — the bulk of Act Two is a boxing match between

Sarah and Renzo, as foreplay before a more intimate wrestling match — are kept in check by director Johnson enough to keep the rest of the text human and reasonable. The simple points are made: you can't deny emotion, everybody has their own worth, life has its ups and downs but it all works out in the end. And although the play sometimes resembles *The Beverly Hillbillies Meet the Honeymooners*, it has a core of humanity that has generally been missing from many of Innaurato's other plays. The situations are emotionally believable, the characters are well drawn and the women are real and strong without being destructive. (Having come this far, maybe he can now write a decent play about homosexuals.) With the endless trials that small theaters face, it's refreshing to see that the Nucleo is able to get together an enjoyable evening with a good play, some wonderful acting and a great production.

that [review] was improvidently granted and let the lower court opinion stand; they could potentially reach *Onofre* but probably

not without additional briefs being needed; or they could decide this case is presented on the merits and issue an opinion."



William Gardner



## Yentl

Continued from page 16

**Michael:** Well, there's also the line where she says she's been up since dawn plucking the chicken, she's too tired to learn.

**Andrea:** Yes. I'm glad that was there. That was a good point, but brief.

**Michael:** I agree that your vision of feminism and Barbra Streisand's arc different. Hers is sort of like early issues of *MS* magazine, which was fine for 1971. But don't you think even *MS* of 1971 challenged some people in very different circles from ours? Don't you think for some isolated women somewhere who happen to see this movie — you know at the end when Avigdor asks her, "What do you want?" and she says, "More" — don't you think it would affect some people?

**Andrea:** Yes, I agree with you. And especially the part when she does go off to America at the end. I was really glad she did that, that she was, finally, shown as making that choice, the choice of an independent woman.

But I want to go back to your description of Streisand's vision as like a fairy tale. As I remember the Grimm and Andersen fairy tales, they were pretty gloomy, pretty complex. And they had a lot of poor people. Which is another thing that really bothered me about the movie: why was Jewish life and that whole environment so cleaned up? If it's supposed to be about Jews in Poland in 1904, do it! You could go away from *Yentl* thinking, "Oh, what are those Jews always complaining about? They weren't oppressed at all, they had rich beautiful places to live in. In fact

they were the only ones who lived in the cities at that time. Certainly no one was making pogroms against them." I mean it was supposed to be such a Jewish movie but it seems to me the only Jewish message is Jews are just like everyone else: the men are tough and masculine and muscular, the women are every bit as pretty, in the same way, as the American ideal. So you see, you don't need to be scared of us, we aren't poor or oppressed or angry, we're just nice Americans like the rest of you.

I found myself wondering if Barbra Streisand had lost so much touch, with all her rich houses, that she couldn't imagine that there were some people who didn't live like that. Because it was, it was very atypical. I'm sure that interiors like we saw did exist, but it was certainly not the way most Jews lived.

**Michael:** Well, think of that movie from the '50s about Emily Bronte, with Ida Lupino. They show the vicarage where the sisters lived as this 15-room spacious house, and when you see the real photos, they lived in this little hovel out in the moors somewhere. So there isn't that much difference in the Hollywood of 1948 and 1983 in that way.

**Andrea:** I guess not!

**Michael:** But I think you're losing track of the fact that this is being directed by a woman. There have only been three women directors who have ever gotten any recognition in Hollywood. Streisand is perhaps the fourth. Also the fact that she has always been, and is more so lately, closely identified with her Judaism — both of

which are real dampers on the movie's marketability. I know that the movie was scheduled to open around Christmas time and the studio freaked out because most theaters, especially out in the Midwest, said they didn't want to book it because it had what they called "limited appeal." And this even a though Barbra Streisand movie has never lost money, even though she's the only bankable woman in Hollywood, and every record she's made has won her a gold record. They were perceiving the movie as being directed and written by a Jewish woman, about Jews. So what they did, they opened the movie in LA and New York to build up a market for it, knowing that LA and New York would pick up a large Jewish and gay audience, then they'd distribute it in other parts of the country.

So I agree that she made choices that were compromises, but I think there were real reasons for her doing that. You have to remember that she did this movie entirely on her own. She pushed it for 14 years.

**Andrea:** I just think if you're going to push something for 14 years, make it something that's worth pushing!

**Michael:** You have to see it within its historical context, though.

**Andrea:** I think you use that as an excuse. "I may not like this or that, but it comes out of this long historical context, so it's all right."

**Michael:** No, I don't say it's all right, just that it does come out of a historic context.

**Andrea:** Well, so does fascism.

**Michael:** And so does revolution.

fine fiddling throughout the tape.

The second side of the tape ends with a longtime favorite of mine. It is a song many mothers, as well as those who spend a lot of time with young children, will surely be able to relate to. Kathy Moore's "Lovesong" (music by P.D.), written when her first daughter was very young, captures both the joys and frustrations, high moments and low points of being a mother. There is something beautifully honest about this song. A part of it follows:

*I show her the ocean  
she shows me the sky.  
I give her the ocean  
she gives me the sky.  
My world is growing  
through her small new eyes.*

*She won't let me eat,  
she won't let me talk.  
Arms full of groceries  
and the kid won't walk.  
People are staring  
the child is upset.  
I can't find my keys  
it's cold, windy, and wet.*

*When she's singing  
rivers rush in tune.  
When she's flowing  
waters rise in tune.  
I hear her heart beat.  
Like the waxing moon.*

It is sad that Solid Ground will not be with us much longer, and sadder still that they have no plans to put out another tape. One of my regrets about this tape is that they did not include a song they call "Our Song" which is their answer to what to tell audiences about their personal lives. It's a riddle which includes all sorts of information about each of them, but leaves the audience guessing about which piece goes with which person. It would have made a good addition, and I personally would have liked it better than "Over the Rainbow" or even Margie Adam's "Babychild." But that's a small complaint, and this is a fine tape.

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## Solid Ground

Continued from page 13

Ground"), Fred Small ("Annie," "Letter From May Alice Jeffers"), Cassandra Amesley ("Coffee"), Mary Lou Layne Chandler ("Thread of Justice"), Margie Adam ("Babychild"), and I.Y. Harburg ("Over the Rainbow").

The first side of the tape opens with Ginni Clemen's song "Solid Ground," the song from which the group takes its name. ("Oh, Mama Mama Mama, spread the news all over town, that the women in this city, they have their feet on solid ground.") There is something about this song, as well as "Coffee" — which no office worker could listen to without a smile of recognition — that captures some of the spirit and spunk of the early women's liberation movement:

*Coffee, the bane of my life  
I am not made to be an office  
wife,  
You've got hands and a  
modicum of sense and health  
You can make your goddamn  
coffee for yourself.*

It's the spirit of the early women's movement, as well as the range of topics sung about and a class consciousness that is woven throughout many of the songs that make this tape special.

Kathy Moore's "Promises" is a melodious and poetic song about class, private property, childhood and the contrasting vantage points of a mother and young daughter. A section from that song:

*I was 16 years old  
when the place where I lived  
was sold.  
With my sister and my mother  
I went looking for another.  
We finally found an empty  
house,  
And every February night,  
We'd go to fix the things we  
could,  
Without the heat, with little  
light.*

*Abandoned house,  
not fit to live in.  
Swallows in the great old  
barns.  
Neglected orchards growing  
wild  
between the wooded lake and  
farm.*

*Two rolling miles of lake front  
land.  
Priced too high to sell.  
A young girl's dream of  
summer fields,  
An aging woman's winter  
hell....*

"Stealin'" (words by Kathy Moore, music by Gus Cannon) is perhaps the best song on the album. The group's harmonies and instrumentals are at their best. All four take turns singing lead, and Kathy and Karen both play some fine guitar. The song is a fine critique of a society that puts small-time thieves in jail while allowing heads of corporations to freely steal the time and lives of their workers.

The song ends with these fitting comments:

*Stealin', we're stealing  
my dog could run this economy  
better than the men  
that stole it from you and me.*

The first time I saw Jan Thyer perform with Solid Ground was at the Great American Lesbian Art Show (GALAS). She wore jeans, a flannel shirt and a big button on her shirt which said simply "DYKE." She sings lead vocal in the group's version of Fred Small's "Annie," a song about a lesbian school teacher. She also sings lead in "Paper Globe," a song Moore wrote after listening to Jan talk about her father, who worked a linotype machine in the days before word processors and computer typesetting machines. Jan's wonderful full deep voice contrasts beautifully with the higher voices of Carol, Kathy and Karen. In addition to her rich voice, Jan contributes some very







## Classifieds ORGANIZATIONS

### GAY LESBIAN AND JEWISH?

Am Tikva welcomes you. Activities include religious observances, discussions, potluck dinners, folk dancing, etc. For events, check GCN Calendar. call (617) 782-8894 or write PO Box 11, Camb, MA 02238.

### ATTENTION ORGANIZERS!

If you belong to, or want to form, a non-profit lesbian/gay organization anywhere in the world, and you think it deserves the exposure a GCN Classified ad can give it, we offer special rates just for you. A year (50 deathless issues) for a mere \$100. If a year costs more than you want to spend right now, you may pay in quarterly installments of \$30, \$30, \$30 and \$10. This is for an ad with one headline and a maximum of 8 lines of copy. Such an ad at present would cost \$6.50 per insertion, so this is really a super bargain. Now, rush right out and catch yourself a Classified! You'll be glad you did. Just cut this coupon out and send it along with your ad and payment, to receive the best deal in town.

### D.O.B.

Suppt orgnzn for lesbians, 1151 Mass Ave, Camb, Old Bap. Raps evry Tues, Thurs 8 pm; 35 pls rap 2nd Wed, last Fri. 8 pm & 3rd Sat 7 pm; Parents & Co-parents rap 1st & 3rd Mons, 8 pm. Softball evry Sun 3 pm Apr-Sept, weath permtn. Magazine Fld. Bimonthly mag FOCUS \$8. Mnthly social & ndraising event. Info & office hrs 661-3633. All women invited to participate.

### GAY MEN'S COVEN

Gay Pride, Feminist, Spiritual. Exploring the cycles within our lives and nature with a traditional witchcraft base. Study is graded towards initiation. NY & Seattle. Kathexis Anthropol, PO Box 4538, Sunnyside, NY 11104. SASE, please! (30)

### N AMER MAN/BOY LOVE ASSOC

A support group for intergenerational relationships. For information send \$1 to: NAMBLA—GCNAD, PO Box 174, New York, NY 10018. (48)

### GAY SWITCHBOARD OF NYC

When you're in New York, give us a call for the latest information in gay and lesbian events, which bars to go to, where to stay, what group to contact, and which businesses to patronize. Call us to rap or just to say hello. (212) 777-1800 from noon til midnight.

### LESBIANS & GAY CHRISTIANS

& othrs skng spiritual fulfillmt: if interested in establishing local congregatn of church (Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches) ministering to those who feel excluded or unfulfilled by mainstream churches. in Camb or sburbs call 492-7922 or write POB 1397, Camb, MA 02238. (29)

### LESBIAN NETWORKING NEWSLETTER

TELEWOMAN, Box 2306, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 is a national lesbian newsletter. Network resources, lesbian fiction, poetry, art, photography, book reviews, profiles, women's spirituality, exquisite graphics, links between country & city lesbians. \$1 sample issue, \$12 sub. (32)

### FAT IS BEAUTIFUL

Are you a fat man and/or fat lover? Then join Girth & Mirth of NY. Monthly parties, read Fat Apple Review with penpals from all over. For Info write: G&M/B, c/o DMS, Box 513, 132 W 24th St., NY, NY 10011. (28)

### THE HIRSUTE CLUB

Erotic Fraternity 4 hairy men & men who love them. Hot photos, lists of hunky guys; & more! Info: send \$2 — PO Box 11514, SF, CA 94101. (18yrs +) (28)

## HOME WANTED

Prof M lkg to share house/apt/w/same. I work in Laconia HN. Home SB in Lac area or between Manch & Lac w/easy access to I93 or other direct route. If you have space to rent, pls call Chris at (603) 627-2192. (27)

## GCN SPECIALS

### HOW DRY WE ARE! HOW DRY WE ARE!

And we would really appreciate it if someone out in that big world could give us a humidifier. No kllding, the air in here in winter is dreadfully lacking in moisture and our hot breath doesn't do the trick (not here, anyway). Our sacred typesetting machine would like the moister air also. Anyone willing, give Mike a ding at 426-4469. Thanks.

### BOSTON GAY HISTORY

We are seeking information on Scollay Square and its immediate surroundings during and before World War II, especially on the Imperial Cafe and Hotel as a cruising and drinking spot for seamen, as well as the Old Howard Burlesque on Howard St. and the Casino Burlesque on Hanover St., the 5¢ all-night movie theaters. Any contributions will be greatly appreciated. Please write Freddie Greenfield, c/o GCN, 167 Tremont St., 5th Fl., Boston, MA 02111 or call (617) 426-4469 and leave a message so we can set up an interview.

### CLASSIFIED ADVERTISERS

Please send me anecdotes about the experiences you have had as a result of either placing or answering a GCN personal. I want to write a piece about it. Everything will be done very discreetly. Tell me if you want me not to use your name and I will definitely not use it. Just send info to Walker, GCN, 167 Tremont St., 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02111. Thank you very much.

### ATTENTION ADVERTISERS!!

People have been leaving classifieds downstairs by our front door early in the morning (late at night???) Please, do not do that. We often do not receive them. Thank you.

GCN's office manager would love to have some strong dyke or sweet faggot (or vice versa, or however) to help put some order (not too much!) in our storage 'closet': assembling some metal shelving we have and putting the GCN and other 'archives' in shape. Any afternoons Mon thru Fri your labor/play will be appreciated. If interested call Mike at 426-4469.

### \$\$SHORT \$STORY

Mary had a little store. Louise had one as well. They each took out a classified, And now their coffers swell. Try a GCN Classified. Our Ads get results!!!

### PROMOTIONS NEEDS HELP

GCN Promotions Dept needs help doing small mailings & other fun things. If you have a few hours during the day (say, once a week) consider spending them at GCN. Call Richard at 426-4469. Hurry.

### GET SMART!

The rumor is that folks who advertise in the GCN Classifieds get whatever they are looking for. Try us. We reach the audience you want to contact.

### DEAR ADVERTISER

It race is not a crucial issue for you, why put it in your ad? It is not a required formula: GWM, GWF are not necessary; GM, GF would do as well.

## WRITERS

### ATTENTION GAY WRITERS

Gay men interested in forming writer's workshop please write GCN Box 770. Include phone # if possible. (27)

## FOR SALE

### CONTEMPORARY STYLE ARMOIRE

For sale \$250—4 drawers, 2 deep shelves & mirror—18 in deep, 35 in wide, 47 in high. For more info call 497-0646. (27)

## PENPALS

BLACK MALE PRISONER WISHES to correspond with generous loving gay people 18 to ? Race no barrier. Mr Richard Johnson PO Box 779-No 135225 Marquette Michigan 49855. (28)

## RESORTS

Spend winter vacation on 40 ft sailboat in Key West. Sail snorkel party & relax for less than cost of hotel most long wknds. (617) 266-0309. (27)

### GREENHOPE FARM

Fabulous x-country skiing right from our door. Guided tours & lessons avail. Downhill skiing nearby. In Vt 3½ hrs from Boston. Cozy fireplace, pvt rms, veg meals. By reservation. (802) 533-7772. (27)

San Francisco or Los Angeles = 1984. Bed-and-Breakfast in pvt gay homes. Friendship. Comfort. Write: BayHosts, 1155 Bosworth, SF, CA 94131. (28)

### BRINLEY VICTORIAN INN

Romance a friend in Newport this winter! Cozy rooms have antiques & flowers. Come, let us pamper you! GCN disc., inc brkft. (401) 849-7645. (32)

Stable Bunkhouse Box 606, Wilmington, VT 05363. Phil (802) 464-3932. Just a bunk or room/B apt or house. Night, weeknd, week, mnth or season. (33)

### VERMONT GUESTHOUSE

Downhill/x-country skiing, snowshoe walks, & a cozy wood stove for keeping warm. Bd & bkfst for lesbians & gay men—nr Stratton, Mt Snow. Reserv only. Dave & Mike (802) 348-7840.

## OFFICE SPACE

Harvard Sq. DOB has approx 300 sq ft avail immed for daytime use Mon, Tues, Ths. Therapists, human services. \$125/mo. Call 864-9275 or 641-0788. Leave message saying office space, your name and number. (21)

## WANTED

### GCNer Wrecked

New Art Director—hired solely for use of her car (or so they say)—now finds herself without "Old Faithful." Her only chance for job security is to find the car of her dreams, i.e.: cheap, running, and small. Now, if it also had power steering or air conditioning (ho, ho ho), she wouldn't complain. Send photo with measurements... (Oops! Wrong ad!) If you have a marvel of a car that you are ready to part with, drop me a line with the specifics and a number where you can be reached. Susan Yousem, c/o GCN, 167 Tremont St., 5th floor, Boston, MA 02111.

## SERVICES

### GAY MEN'S WEEKEND

weekend workshop in the country to explore & clarify what being gay men means collectively & individually. Call Francis 628-6988.

### HOUSE CLEANING SERVICE

Leave your house cleaning to me. Very dependable. References available. Call Roger, 776-6377. (27)

Tax Tamer—Expert income tax work at reasonable rates. Long or short forms. (MA amnesty till 1/17.) 4 yrs pro experience. 436-2583. (27)

### HOLISTIC THERAPY/HYPNOSIS

For self-improvement relaxation & habit control. Also on-going therapy group for men. Located in Central Square Cambridge. Jim O'Brien 576-2114. (29)

### GAY MEN'S THERAPY GROUP

Has February Openings  
Group Focus Is  
Intimacy-Relationships-  
Gay Self-Image  
Insurance Accepted  
Call JIM FISHMAN, LICSW  
262-7633

### COUNSELING—PSYCHOTHERAPY

For individuals or couples, long or short term. Reasonable rates, sliding scale. John Graves, 266-2069. Formerly 6 years with HCHS. (20)

### TYPESETTING

Want the best??? Let GCN typeset your resume, filler, brochure, newsletter, magazine. You name it! Reasonable rates. Call 426-4469 and ask for Nancy Wechsler.

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HYPNOTHERAPY  
SEX THERAPY  
INSURANCE ACCEPTED  
(617) 353-0225 tor appt.

## Prisoners Seeking Friends

Very attractive young gay boy would like to correspondence with my age (about 18). I love sex very much. Please send letters to David LOMBARDI, 5 Hospital Rd., W. Boylston MA 01583. PS: send me a sexy picture of yourself or a friend.

Once you ran an ad for me and I received a few letters but the people who wrote were not very sincere (I wonder if anyone is sometimes), but I would like to write someone who is for real and doesn't turn their head when they meet someone who is doing time. Everyone in here is not a rip-off (at least no more than on the outside!) and I wish I had someone to talk to now and then. Anyway I also just wanted to say thanks for sending the paper to us here all this time. It gives many days of new hope to a lot of people like myself who have no one. Thanks. Charles CUEVAS, Unit 27 46700 A-12, Parchman MS 38738.

GM alert, kind, constructive, willing to write, open minded, ask only open minded people. Sure hope you write. Robin THRUSH, 161-B43, PO Box 4571, Lima OH 45802.

I would call myself fairly handsome and my hobbies are playing pool, roller skating, ice skating, swimming and dancing. It would be nice to write. Gary CAMP, Box 4571, Lima OH 45802.

### ON 'COMING OUT'

One sure way to make it hard for prisoners coming out of prison to make it on the outside is to keep them from getting jobs and housing. This is just what this society does with its attitudes toward ex-prisoners. Don't be surprised if a penpal asks for some help in finding work or a place to live. Their getting out on parole this year, rather then next, may depend on finding these (or a 'sponsor'), and their staying out will certainly depend on it. The GCN Prisoner Project is always looking for info on jobs and housing resources in all regions of the country.

Start your own prisoner project at a prison near you (the most effective place to be) by getting together and updating this kind of info and making it available to the prisoners who are coming out.

I would like to have a pen friend. I am nice looking, easy going, quiet and would like to meet someone open minded and gay. Joe ALLEN, 21730-0-1, Box 473, Westville IN 46391.

Lonely prisoner needs letters and moral support. Will answer all letters. Ronald JOHNSTON, 44B72, Camp 27, Parchman MS 38738.

I really am a freak when an attractive man dresses up in drag, the whole works. I go by "J.J." or "Joe" and have a beautiful set of legs. I am 32" in the waist and 36" in the behind and when I have a hard on I am about 7". I would very much like to correspond with someone I can share my thoughts with. Right now I am in protective custody because certain inmates were trying to force me to have sexual encounters with them. Joseph C. JONES, A062355, PO Box 158 G257-455, Lowell FL 32663.

### GCN GAY AND LESBIAN PRISONER PROJECT

We send free papers, books (when they are donated and when money for postage is donated) and run free penpal ads. (There's sometimes a long waiting list because of limited space.) Little by little as we get more volunteer labor power we'll be looking for other ways to support lesbians and gay men behind bars. If you can help with your time or a contribution (of money or paperbacks), please send to Gay and Lesbian Prisoner Project, c/o GCN, 167 Tremont St., 5th Fl., Boston, MA 02111. Thanks!

### CLASS WAR PRISONERS

A book is being written about people imprisoned for labor, feminist, anti-racist, gay and other political prosecutions. Civil liberties groups, defense committees, and prisoners are asked to write the following address about cases (their own or others) that they know of: Charles H. Kerr Company, 1740 Greenleaf Ave. Suite 7, Chicago IL 60626.

Since being confined in prison I've learned to understand the gays. In fact in the last B years in here the only love I've witnessed was that of my gay lover. I've grown to accept the gay movement with the same zeal as the black movement. I'm well aware that I have nothing to offer anyone if they decide to write, but I promise to be for real. I'm not a large masculine physique build but I'm very sensitive (dynamite comes in small packages). If my acquaintance is accepted by your club I'll be very appreciative. Respectfully, Ronald DANCY, 031096, PO Box 221, Raiford FL 32083.

## BLUE '34

Oh Boy!  
Here He Comes  
Again! Time  
To Go into  
My Act!

PPRRRR...

Think Whatever You  
WANT.... Belly Rubs  
Are Still Legal And  
A DAMN Good Cheap  
Thrill.....



TO ALL THOSE WHO IN AND OUT OF PRISON FIGHT AGAINST THEIR BONDAGE (Alexander Berkman, Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist).



I am 24 and my most outstanding features are my hair and eyes, and also I am a lesbian and would like to hear from people out there to have a link with the outside. Katherine WEATHERS, 1B79B, MCU-121-B, Frontera CA 91720.

Hi girls! Nice looking 33 year old stud who is down and out and is looking for meaningful relationship with a nice free lady. Terry DePew, 12B47, LB 335, Frontera CA 91720.

Dear Nina, You wrote me in Dec. but didn't put a return address. I'd like very much to write. Please write again. You live in Canada and are a brunette. My name is Noradean Alexander, 15614B, 1479 Collins Ave, Marysville OH 43040.

I am an aggressive woman, 19 years old, and love older women. As they say, older women make better lovers. Briana DAWER, Latham B 304, W-18421, Frontera CA 91720.

I would like penpals to write to and develop meaningful friendships. Due to institutional policy I cannot correspond with any one who is currently incarcerated. Sheila SCHERTZ, 301072, Box A, Oakdale IA 52319.





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Enclosed is my check or money order for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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